# Saturday Review

OF LITERATURE

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By GERALD ABRAHAM

*(See Saturday Review Recordings Section, page 45)*

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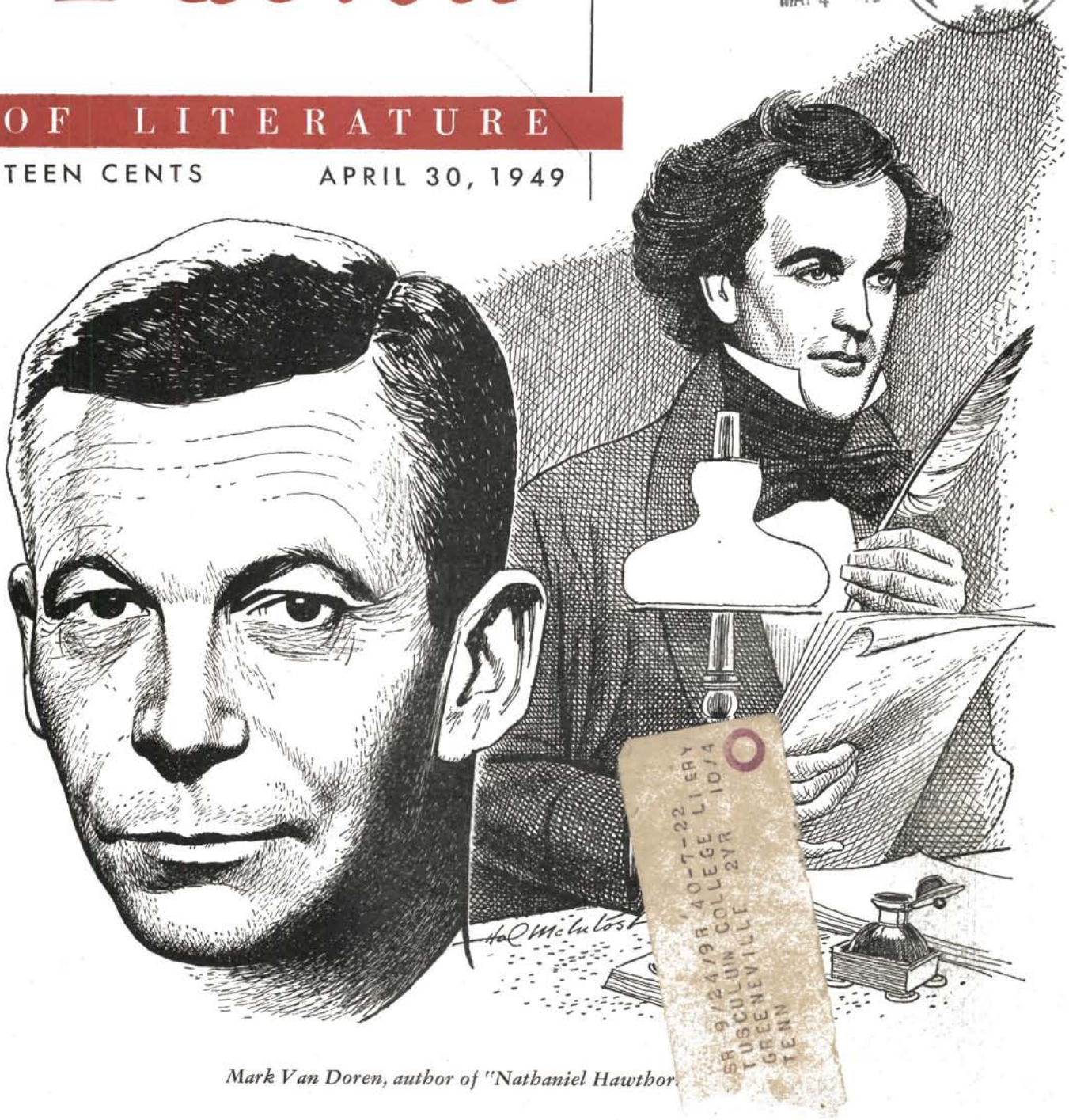


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## *Reading Before Writing*

By JAMES A. MICHENER

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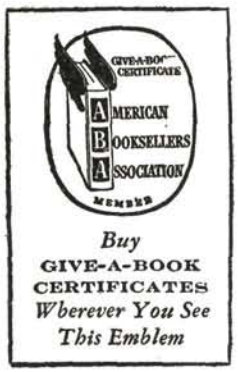


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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. E. De Golyer, Chairman of the Board; Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lillian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Robert A. Low, Advertising Manager; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Robert Birnbaum, Assistant Circulation Director. Subscription $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulation. Printed in the U. S. Vol. XXXII, No. 18, April 30, 1949. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office in New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."


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## HISTORY OF WORLD ART

*by* EVERARD M. UPJOHN, PAUL S. WINGERT, *and* JANE GASTON MAHLER

The text is designed to give the basic facts and interpretations for an introduction to the art of the world's major cultures from the pre-classical era to the twentieth century. Both American and Oriental art are more fully and clearly presented here than in comparable surveys. Modern art, too, receives a balanced and thoughtful treatment.

The pictures are handsome and plentiful. There are 320 pages of plates reproduced by a new process that permits remarkable precision and richness of detail. There are 654 illustrations of the most representative works of art, those which are described fully in the text. More than that, the reproductions are placed separately from the text, and so constitute in themselves a pictorial history of world art. This arrangement has also made possible an uncluttered, attractive text page and larger reproductions.

The relations between the arts have been emphasized by discussing painting, architecture, sculpture, and minor arts concurrently, rather than in separate sections. Unusually full attention has been given to that step-child of many other art histories—architecture.

Endpaper maps of Europe and the Orient, a chronological table, glossary of technical terms, selected reading list, and complete index are textbook features that make the book more useful for all readers.

Enthusiastic comments and adoptions have been coming in from colleges and universities all over the country. John Fabian Kienitz, Chairman of the Department of History and Criticism of Art of the University of Wisconsin, writes 'Your *World Art* seems to me to be by far the best art historical text in English. The illustrations and text make exactly the book we've been looking for.' At the same time from outside university circles, Peyton Boswell, Jr., editor of the *Art Digest*, says that in his opinion the authors (members of the Fine Arts Department of Columbia University) 'have more than accomplished their objective of writing an introduction to art history that combines a textbook and general reader appeal . . .' $6.00

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# TRADE Winds

## CALIFORNIA

**JUST BEFORE I LEFT** Beverly Hills in March, I had occasion to address the alert membership of Los Angeles's Friday Morning Club. For the record, I drove down on Wilshire (subject of Ralph Hancock's "Fabulous Boulevard," due soon from Funk & Wagnalls), returned on Sunset (subject of Brackett and Wilder's up-coming Paramount picture for Gloria Swanson), and explored en route several streets with strange names that will be explained in Erwin Gudde's "California Place Names" (University of California Press). . . . My driver on the way back was lovely Jane Parsons (no relation of Louella), who waited for me while I called on Virgil Rewick (Fowler Brothers's renowned authority on niblick shots and medical tomes). Enough of these statistics! . . .

As a reward for serving as my chauffeuse, I promised Miss Parsons I would print her story of the stenographer who turned up for work one morning flashing a diamond ring *bigger* than the Ritz. "What did you have to do to get that?" asked her catty fellow workers. "Nothing," she replied airily. "I told you when Grandma died last week she left $3,000 for a stone commemorating her memory. Well, this is the stone." . . .

When Timothy Turner interviewed me for the *Los Angeles Times*, his photographer took a picture that would make a suitable label for Pluto Water. I forgot about it until a letter was forwarded to me in Fresno from a would-be author of a "one-volume encyclopedia of everything man has learned through the ages." "You are the only publisher I know of," was his flattering conclusion, "who has the courage to sponsor this great work." There was a postscript however. It read, "I have just been studying your photograph in the *Times*. If you are as goofy as you look, I sure have wasted my time and postage." . . .

**ABOUT A THIRD OF THE WAY UP** California's lush San Joaquin valley—between Bakersfield and Fresno—an imaginary line might be drawn. When anybody south of this line talks about "a trip to the city" he means Los Angeles; north of it he means San Francisco. The rivalry between the two metropolises grows more bitter with the years. San Francisco, its industries hard hit by recurrent labor strife on the waterfront, watches the continuing mushroom growth of its southern neighbor with undisguised displeasure. . . . It seems to me there is a rich opportunity for some ingenious publicist to cash in on this rivalry via the Pacific Coast baseball league. Adroit needling could make intra-city series between the San Francisco Seals, Los Angeles Angels, and Hollywood Stars almost as heavily patronized and frenzied as the National League battles of the Giants and Dodgers. . . .

Fresno (principal products: grapes, prunes, peaches, and Bill Saroyan) boasts a Grade-A bookstore, run by Roy Edgerton and Mrs. Crawford, and Elizabeth Lake, of Station KMJ, a brilliant and level-headed executive until the name of John Mason Brown enters the conversation. The effect of my distinguished *SRL* compatriot on the womanhood of America defies description. Combining the eloquence of Churchill, the virile charm of Errol Flynn, and the memory for babies' names of a gubernatorial candidate, he is unquestionably the best loved and most sensationally successful lecturer in the country. (Take 'em away, John.) . . .

**THE DRIVE OVER THE MOUNTAINS** from Fresno to San Francisco is beautiful in the early spring. When we ran into a sudden storm on the way, I remarked, "All we need to complete the picture is a rainbow." Ten minutes later we had one. "Nature provides everything man can ask for—and right on schedule—in California," pointed out my guide, Mr. James Russell, who has been there now for two years, qualifying him as a native son. "I remember Martin Flavin inviting me for tea at Carmel. 'Be here by four,' he insisted. 'That's when the whales appear off-shore and give us a show.' Darned if those whales didn't show up at four on the nose. That's the kind of state this is." . . .

**A FOOL SCHEDULE ALLOWED** me just one day in San Francisco this year. I had dinner at Tarantino's on Fishermen's Wharf with a merry group that included Charlotte and Joe Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. John Bruce, Sybil Bardshaw, Tro Harper, and Herb Caen and his wife. Caen's column in the

"He switched to Calvert, all right, but he never gave up his old brand."



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*Chronicle* is the most popular on the Coast, and deservedly so. His "San Francisco Book," Bruce's "Gaudy Century," O'Brien's "This Is San Francisco," and Jackson's "Gold Rush Album" all are best sellers, and all products of the *Chronicle* staff. In fact, things have come to such a pass that an anonymous wag tacked a notice on the *Chronicle*'s bulletin board which read, "Since the publication of a book has become a rigid requirement for all *Chronicle* employees wishing to retain their jobs, we now offer a special discount and strictly confidential service to all staff members wishing novels or non-fiction ghost written." . . . Caen told me of a friend who sent his beautiful but low-I. Q. bride to Oregon for a vacation. When she came home, he asked her, "What did you notice in Oregon that was different from California?" She weighed her answer very carefully, and then came through with, "A lot more of the automobiles up there seem to carry Oregon license plates!" . . .

**THE *SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER*** has been breaking in a new society gossip. Its "Freddie Francisco," who had titillated the town for three years with his brash and disrespectful brevities about the high and mighty, had been exposed in print by a vengeful rival as a gent named Bob Patterson, with a hefty criminal record. Patterson, as a matter of fact, had made no secret of his career (I had an interesting correspondence with him myself when he was editing the Atlanta Penitentiary magazine), but when the sensational publicity broke, Mr. Hearst decreed that he would have to go. Patterson, seemingly unperturbed by this latest turn in his fortunes, is completing a novel for Scribner's. . . . The story goes that Patterson owed his original job on the *Examiner* to an amusing fluke. From Atlanta, he solicited employment on several newspapers, mentioning specifically that he was doing time. An *Examiner* editor filed his application, unearthed it when he began looking for a society columnist, glanced through it, remarked, "Here's a fellow who was on *Time*"—and hired him. . . .

**PAUL ELDER'S NEW BOOKSHOP** is one of the sights for San Francisco tourists (who also drop into the Middleton-Harper store after helping to push the cable-cars around on the turntable at the foot of Powell Street), the Newbegins continue to do a whopping business across from the St. Francis, and Louis Lengfeld, assisted by a bevy of lovely ladies and a knight in full armor, has established a flourishing trade as Books, Inc., but


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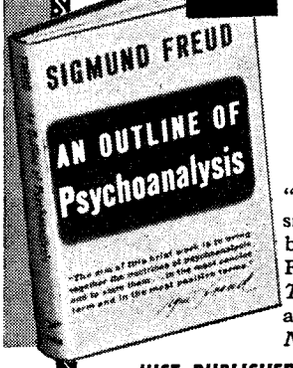


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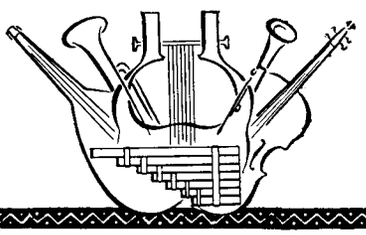

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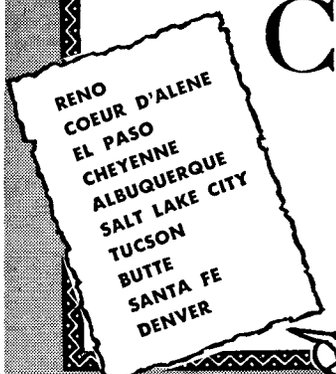


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old-timers here miss the late Leon Gelber and Ted Lilienthal, who just plain got tired of the book business. And what ever became of Dave Newberry, who ran the Emporium book department with such a dashing air?

. . .

I spoke at the Curran Theatre, had a bite with Fred Thompson, galloped over to say hello to my friends Earl Wilson and Jim Habersham, and was rushed to the airport by my cousin Delphine, most beautiful branch of the family tree, if that is a compliment. . . .

In Sacramento, the legislature was legislating, rain was flooding the streets, and State Librarian Mabel Gillis was entertaining big-wigs. . . . Sam Levinson, who, after twenty-five years in the same location, has become one of the best-known booksellers in America, recalled his boyhood, when he latched on to a job in London's Fleet Street, and carried copy for a writer who turned it out faster than the time required to carry it to the editor's basket. The writer's name was Rudyard Kipling. . . . Will Rogers, Jr., disclosed that Houghton Mifflin were fashioning excerpts from his father's magazine articles, newspaper columns, and humorous books into a sort of autobiography for September publication. . . .

**IN STOCKTON, IN ADDITION TO A** lecture at the College of the Pacific, a visit to J. W. Gardner, and a party at George Leistner's house, I dined with Dean Fred Farley and Professor Malcolm Eiselen, who speedily qualified for Huebsch's Pun-American Congress by suggesting the removal of the Georges Braque exhibition from the Museum of Modern Art to Princeton, so it could be advertised as "Going Braque to Nassau Hall." They also told of a Cockney who greeted a friend at the hospital with, " 'Ullo, James, come in to die?," and was answered, "No, Bill; yesterdye." But their students love them! . . . At the Leistners,' I sat in a Barwa chair for the first time. It's a simple contraption, recently described in *Look,* where your feet wind up higher than your head, but it's amazingly relaxing and comfortable, once you get over the feeling that you are about to fall off and break your neck. For details, write to Barwa Associates, 49 East Ontario St., Chicago. . . . I concluded the evening with a shot of fine bourbon, and headed for Reno, Nevada, chuckling over the memory of the time a hostess tried to dilute some bourbon of William Faulkner's with water. "Madam," Bill told her severely, "if the good Lord had intended water to be in bourbon, he'd have put it there!"

—BENNETT CERF.


**This book may not inspire you to mink breeding, potato growing, monkhood, or joining the Shakers, but it is pretty sure to afford you hours of entertainment**

*and some people who found it*

# By Berton Roueché

The happily never-ending succession of stories about out-of-the-way people in unusual businesses and professions has long been a favorite feature of *The New Yorker.* Now here is a whole book full of them by the man who has poked into an astonishing number of odd corners—and come back with entertaining accounts of his pleasurable excursions into "other fellows' yards."

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*The Saturday Review of Literature*

# *Reading Before Writing*

JAMES A. MICHENER

—*Blackstone Studios.*
**James A. Michener**

A HALF dozen books have recently been published about writing.* The conclusion is that authors can be divided into two groups, the ninety-eight per cent who aspire and the successful two per cent who perspire. Kenneth Roberts, in his literary autobiography, states the thesis best: "It's my profound belief that one cannot become a writer of any standing unless he learns to drive himself incessantly and ruthlessly. . . ."

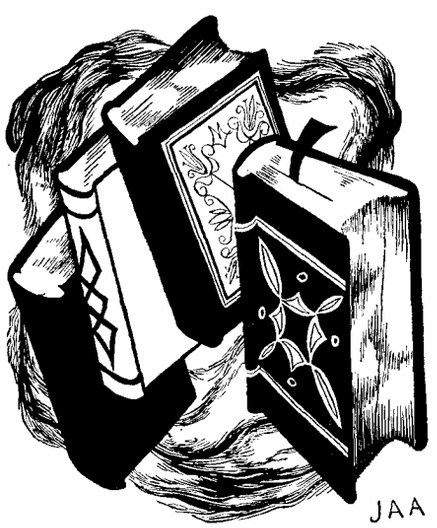
Gorham Munson, who has taught hundreds to write, says almost the same thing: "When I think . . . of my own 'teaching' experience, I grow positive that *anyone can become a skilled writer.* But, obviously, not everyone will. Those whose desire falters will not."

These six books deal with writing as a way to make a living. The creation of deathless masterpieces is not under discussion; but within the limited field of comment the authors have much to say that beginning writers should read. After the basic skills have been learned, one can then study life and the great novels to perfect those skills.

Every writer should learn the structure of his language. He need not master the difference between gerunds and participles. Many successful authors cannot distinguish between these forms, nor would they be better writers if they could. But one must comprehend the basic construction of a sentence, and to do this one must know the nature of verbs and adverbs plus a smattering of punctuation and the relation of clauses one to another.

This, you say, is high-school stuff. Correct, and if an aspiring writer has not yet mastered high-school grammar, as most of us have not, he should read "The Way to Write," by Rudolph Flesch and A. H. Lass. This is a successful school composition book, dressed up for adults. It is engaging and easy to understand. Mature readers will find its high-school tone condescending, but Gorham Munson recommends it highly: " 'The Way to Write' is more than a good elementary text; it is ideal of its kind."

Writers can never know enough about their language. Even so careful a novelist as David Davidson can wreck a sentence through failing to recognize that sometimes verbs and prepositions unite into indissoluble *de facto* verbs, and that when this happens silly rules about prepositions at ends of sentences should be ignored: "A joke—but one with which, in this land of formalisms, it was easier to fall in." Or consider how Graham Greene manages to place an adverb in the only spot where it completely obscures meaning: "He studied the woman who sat in his chair covertly."




AFTER mastering the rudiments of English, the aspiring writer could profitably study one or more of the better books on writing as a skill. Gorham Munson's "The Written Word" can be recommended. Munson has been a writer, teacher, and editor. His present book is a summary of principles taught by him at the New School for Social Research. The first section deals with the subtle relationship between writer and reader. Munson says that writing which does not lure the reader (who is characterized as an indifferent churl who would prefer anything to reading) is poor writing. He advises each writer to imagine a cantankerous reader over his shoulder, eager to run away if a single passage becomes dull. This is a restatement of Oscar Hammerstein 2nd's memorable observation that there seems to be an inexhaustible supply of people willing to stay away from a dull play.

Most useful is the last section, which provides an immense store of compact information about getting started in writing. Munson insists that "you haven't finished writing something until you've had it published." Then he becomes commendably depressing. Quoting Edward Weeks, of *The Atlantic Monthly*, he says, "A conscientious estimate will probably show that there are no more than a quarter of a million American authors —or would-be authors—at large." Martha Foley's estimate of America's short-story writers is also given, half a million. Munson's own guess at the yearly average earnings of all professional writers, not aspiring ones, is a sickening $2,300. In view of this, he

---

*I WANTED TO WRITE. By Kenneth Roberts. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1949. 471 pp. $3.50.

THE WRITTEN WORD. By Gorham Munson. New York: Creative Age Press. 1949. 263 pp. $2.95.

WRITING—FROM IDEA TO PRINTED PAGE. By Glenn Gundell, with a foreword by Frank Luther Mott. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1949. 374 pp. $5.95.

THE WRITING TRADE. By Paul R. Reynolds. Boston: The Writer, Inc. 1949. 141 pp. $2.50.

WRITERS: LEARN TO EARN. By Mildred I. Reid. Boston: Bruce Humphries, Inc. 1948. 225 pp. $2.50.

THE WAY TO WRITE. By Rudolph Flesch and A. H. Lass. New York: Harper & Bros. 1949. 342 pp. $3.50.



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advises young writers to "hang on to [a steady, salaried] job until you are positive that you will do better financially by giving all your time to writing."

The strength of Munson's book is its rich store of illustration. The weakness is the author's constant reliance upon quotation to prove a point. The reader often wishes that Munson would quit quoting and state sharply what he himself thinks.

Munson makes a modest assessment of his accomplishments as a teacher. He advises real writers not to enroll in courses but to study the devices of other writers. To beginners who insist upon enrolling he says, "Remember that writing can never be taught; it can only be learned." Specifically, he commands them never to take a second course, or an advanced course: "It is bad for a would-be writer to go on taking courses; his need is to be active and to feel like a professional; sitting in classrooms term after term is debilitating. . . ."

And yet one of the handsomest books ever to appear on writing is an outgrowth of a successful experiment conducted by the Missouri School of Journalism in conjunction with *The Saturday Evening Post.* Glenn Gundell, advertising and promotion manager of the magazine, presents, in "Writing—From Idea to Printed Page," the case histories of three *Post* articles and two stories. A third story is discussed, but with emphasis on the illustrator's problems.

Kingsley Tufts wrote a short story, "The Shrieking Fish," for the August 2, 1947, issue of the magazine. Gundell reproduces correspondence between author and editor; photographs of the complete first version of the manuscript; rejection slips from *The Post, Collier's, Adventure, Argosy;* photographs of the revised version showing all editorial marks; plus dozens of other exhibits, lacking only a photostat of the payment check (presumably $1,000).

This oversize book will undoubtedly become a standard reference in writing classes, because it takes the reader behind the scenes where editor and author hammer out their ideas.

BY ALL odds the best book of the half dozen is Kenneth Roberts's "I Wanted to Write." This is a frank account of one man's writing life from his Cornell days, through his work on a Boston newspaper, on to his great success as a reporter for *The Saturday Evening Post,* through his struggles over books which did not sell, and finally onto the lofty plateau of dean among the writers of historical fiction.

Roberts's long account focuses upon how he learned to write. He had unflagging determination, abundant vanity, and the ability to work. He recalls one schedule:

> How, in the ensuing three months, I contrived to travel 3,000 miles through the Middle West, do four articles for *The Post,* go through seventy-three biographies, diaries, and other books, including several volumes of the monumental "Force's American Archives," and write the first 60,000 words of "Arundel," I can't exactly remember. All I know is that I wrote on trains, in railway stations, in hotel rooms, and occasionally worked all night.

Much of this book is composed of a remarkably detailed diary, in which the author recorded his progress as a novelist. He explains how he grubbed out the information he needed, how he rewrote, how he went back time after time until the motivation of some character was clarified. He lists every letter he wrote during one year (nearly five a day), how his books sold, down to the last copy (his first four did poorly: 1,300, 2,228, 4,790, 3,782), and what his prejudices were at the moment ("Washington is a fount of fatheadedness."). He also describes his intimate friendship with Booth Tarkington, to whom he read aloud most of his manuscripts, discarding or rewriting as Tarkington suggested. I know of few narratives that so clearly depict an artist at work. This account will be referred to for years to come.

Let me make it clear, however, that Roberts's picture of himself is not always a pleasant one. He shows himself to be an arch-conservative, a man hungry for the good things of life, and a curmudgeon. Particularly annoying is his habit of referring to himself in his lush years as a struggling writer. At a time when he had a house in Florida and another in Maine, when he was at the top of the heap down at *The Post,* and when he could afford an Italian villa for writing, he does not differentiate himself from the suspiring Greenwich Village novelist who ekes out a few dollars a year. In fact, George Horace Lorimer, his patron saint, used to submit jobs at a couple of thousand dollars each, plus all expenses, on a contingent basis: take it if you need the money; forget it if you don't.

But this book is memorable because it shows a very human man embroiled in all the problems that beset writers:

> *Wednesday, March* 5, 1930: Can't find "Arundel" on any list of best sellers, but can find Zane Grey's "Fighting Caravans," an unspeakably terrible piece of tripe; while the non-fiction list is led (for the fortieth consecutive month) by Chic Sale's forty-page monograph on privies. Fearfully depressed that "Arundel" should sell only a few hundred while the most ephemeral drivel is bought by the hundreds of thousands.

At one time or another he rants, like all authors, at the success of others: Daphne Du Maurier's "Jamaica Inn," Hervey Allen's "Anthony Adverse," Walter Edmond's "Drums Along the Mohawk," and Margaret

(*Continued on page* 35)

# *The Sun and Moon Stand Still*

By Robert P. Tristram Coffin

EVENING of all evenings of the year,
The widened sun stands still upon the trees,
The western half of the world runs drops of fire
Like swarms of golden incandescent bees.
The eastern half of earth runs silver moths,
For over the trees of dawn and their soft lace
The vast white moon stares clear and quietly;
The sun and moon have come out face to face;
Earth floods with far antiphonals of light,
For once there is no day, there is no night.

For five slender moments, for as long
As swallows take to fly from east to west,
All people go with seraphs' eyes and brows
Between the time of work and time of rest;
No man has a shadow, none a shade
Of sorrow on his face or line of woe,
The door into his heart is opened wide,
And each man floods his neighbor with his glow;
For the time the sun and moon stand still,
Men are men of light and breathe good will.



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# *Censorship and Stereotypes*

DORE SCHARY

THE columns of *The Saturday Review of Literature* recently have been engaged in a round-robin approval of freedom of speech. Articles by John Haynes Holmes and John Mason Brown [*SRL*, Feb. 26, March 5] speak eloquently of freedom of speech while at the same time they indict what they believe to be an attack on this freedom by sensitive minority criticism.

Opinions rushed off in haste sometime make errors of omission. It is likely that this report will make some errors of its own despite the fact it is not written in haste. Whether Mr. Holmes's and Mr. Brown's opinions were written in haste or not, I do not know. I only know that they both have made errors of omission.

Both Mr. Holmes and Mr. Brown overlook serious factors in the situation they discuss. Furthermore, Mr. Holmes states a false rumor as fact, and Mr. Brown picks it up and repeats it as fact. This rumor concerns "Ivanhoe." The project has not been banned by any minority pressure group. There never was an attempt to ban this project by any minority pressure group. The facts are these: As head of production at RKO Studios in 1947, I purchased from Paramount the scenario prepared on this classic. Aeneas MacKenzie, the screen writer, backed with historical pamphlets attacking Sir Walter Scott for his squeamishness in not having Rebecca marry Ivanhoe, had changed the story to suit the concept that Ivanhoe should have jilted Rowena and gone away with Rebecca. There was good reasoning for this in Mr. MacKenzie's research, but we felt that the classic story should not be altered because audiences could not be told all the reasons that Mr. MacKenzie had made available to himself. So we went back to the original story and prepared the script for production. This picture was to be made in England in collaboration with J. Arthur Rank. RKO's participation with Mr. Rank in this venture collapsed at the time of the British tax decision, and since the picture was a costly venture, the board at RKO decided not to go ahead with the project. Whenever they feel they are justified in spending almost three million dollars for its production, they will probably produce it.

This is stated not as conclusive evidence that everything Mr. Holmes and Mr. Brown related is spurious, but only that their comments concerning "Ivanhoe" are in error.

Concerning freedom of speech, one who believes in any kind of freedom must agree with part of what these gentlemen say; but they, too casually, forget what another Mr. Holmes once said in connection with freedom of speech. He pointed out that freedom of speech did not give one the right to yell "fire" in a crowded theatre.

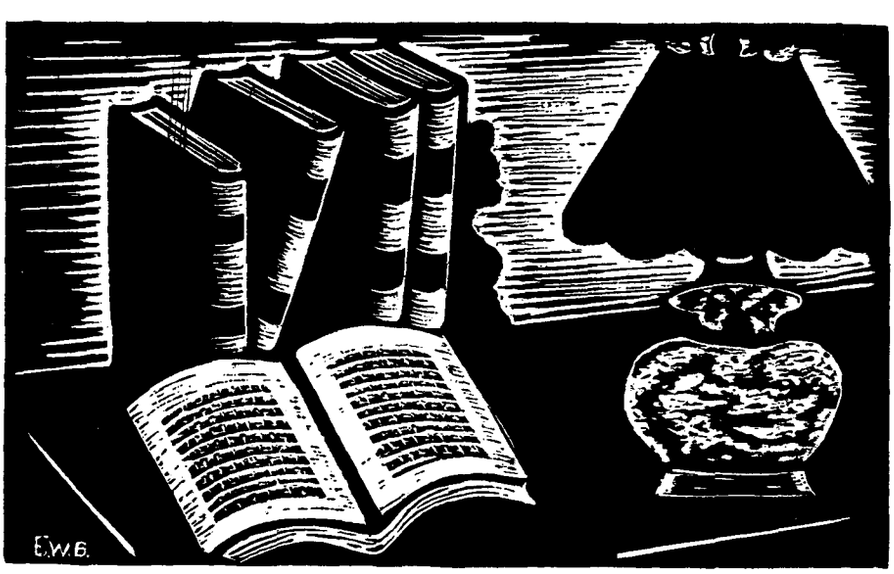
Elements of good taste, plus the desire to curb too aggressive a showmanship, led the motion-picture industry to adopt its own code of censorship. This code is maintained while at the same time we work constantly to have it broadened to accommodate for the rising intellectual standards of our audiences. The motion-picture industry, which is a mass medium of entertainment, information, and reporting, has enormous responsibilities. Some of these responsibilities we have discharged well. Others we have neglected, but we always are trying in some degree to accept and service these neglected responsibilities.

The visual impact of the screen is so powerful and so vivid that, in the hands of irresponsible people, it can become dangerous. In the hands of those who respect it, it can accomplish wonders.

One of Hitler's first propaganda grabs was for the screen. He employed his pictures to great advantage. In a pattern set by history, he propagated his stereotypes and his lies. Pictures in books, periodicals, and newspapers have fed us scores of visual concepts that, because of changing times, are no longer true. Motion pictures in the past were guilty of perpetuating those stereotypes, and if now they seek to destroy them—prove them to be misconceptions—is this lack of freedom or is this rather a desire to tell the truth? By protesting the use of a stereotype, are we inhibiting freedom of speech or is this rather a desire to tell the truth? When Mr. Brown concludes his article quoting, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," what truth is he talking about? Will the representation of Fagin in "Oliver Twist" do damage? Will some people accept Fagin as a true character? And, if they do, is this the truth? If some bigots are comforted, will this "truth" make them free? Truth in many instances is of comparative value. What might be truth to Gerald L. K. Smith might not be truth to the Jewish victim of a riot incited by Mr. Smith's "truth."

I HAVE not seen "Oliver Twist." I have seen photographs from the production which reveal Fagin in his full malevolence. He looks precisely like the Nazi portraits of the Jews that Hitler circulated all through the world. These portraits presently are being perpetuated by the Gerald L. K. Smiths who would quite willingly use Fagin's film portrait as their model. In a world still smoldering with the hates and falsehoods stirred up by the most serious anti-Semitic pogroms of all history, one has a right to question the judgment and the logic of bringing Fagin to the screen at this time. One certainly has the right to question the good sense of opening this film in Berlin, the former center of a political administration that caused the murders of some six million people.

Freedom of speech permits any of



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us to state that the American soldier is a coward, a knave, and a beast. It becomes folly, and we can certainly question the good intentions of anyone who asserts that charge on the morning that our armies land on Anzio or Iwo Jima. Somewhere undoubtedly there was an American soldier who was a coward, a knave, and a beast, but a portrait of such a soldier at a time of war is a disservice, and moreover, probably could be construed to be inflammatory, if not treasonable.

We are still in a war—a war against prejudice and venal intolerance. During such a state of intellectual siege we owe some obligations to minority groups so that the opposing forces are not comforted. If we were living in a world in which all children and people were being carefully insulated from hate and prejudice, there would be no inherent danger in portraying a bad Jew or a villainous Negro or an evil Catholic.

Perhaps Mr. Holmes and Mr. Brown can protect their families from the imposition of prejudice that Fagin might bring. I feel almost certain that I can protect my three children. But, if there are others—such as the family nearby that slammed a door because they discovered we were Jews; or the people around the corner who protested that there were too many "niggers" working too close to them; or the people across the street who said they were in trouble because "the lousy Catholics" had taken over the country—then, certainly, we must weigh carefully the damage that can be done by "art" that unwittingly becomes propaganda for the bigot.

Certainly the Jew or the Negro or the Catholic must not be spared acknowledging his share of sin and error. But the Jew has been the main target of hate. Anti-Semitism in all its virulent aspects, economic, political, social, and religious, is not a sometime thing. It is a calculated program that continues under various auspices. It must be destroyed and forgotten as must all anti-minority hatreds. Part of that good fight includes the business of not aiding or comforting the enemy. The bigots can be comforted by "Oliver Twist" and its Fagin, because of the tremendous wallop of the image.

A successful motion picture is seen by perhaps thirty to forty million people all over the world within a period of some twelve to fifteen months. Any image that reaches that many people in so short a time can do harm or can do good, and do it fast and perhaps permanently. The risk of Fagin doing harm is a great risk. This is not a casual harm it can do, but a real active harm in flaming up the fire that is being fought by every decent agency of information and communication in America.

The American prototype is that of a tall, thin, lithe-muscled man who can shoot straight, hit hard, is self-reliant and knows how to handle himself in any tough circumstances. Because of this flattering identification, we can well afford the criticism and occasional evil portrait of the American personality. If once the Negro stereotype becomes that best represented in the personality of Dr. Bunche, the Negro will be able to afford the luxury of less complimentary portraits. Once the Jewish stereotype becomes perhaps that of a Baruch, we, too, easily will be able to accommodate the representation of a Fagin.

"The Birth of a Nation," mentioned by Mr. Holmes, was a great film. However, in view of the renewed activities of the Ku Klux Klan, a remake of this film could bring legitimate cause for alarm to the Negro minority.

When a war is over we forgive our conscientious objectors who are denied freedom of action and freedom of speech during the days of danger to the republic. When the war against bigotry is concluded, we can condone carelessness and lack of judgment; but, until that time, we have the right to defend ourselves against anything that might help lose that war.

*Dore Schary is Vice-President in charge of production at the studios of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. He was formerly a writer, director and producer.*

# On Dedications

## *(This is written to whom it may not concern)*

A GOOD many years ago, when I was young and charming (Cf "H. M. S. Pinafore") I read all dedications, long introductions, and prefaces to second editions. They seemed to me interminable. Usually they were dedicated to a patron, frequently some lord or other, who had given the author a few pounds.

So I dedicated books, too. To friends—Edna Ferber, Ring Lardner, and Montague Glass. What books? Out of print.

And, for no reason that I know, or ever knew, John O'Hara dedicated a book to me, and so did Dorothy Parker. What books? "Appointment in Samarra" and "Not So Deep as a Well."

And this leads me to some books that I dedicated: One called "Overset," "To Herbert Bayard Swope, Without Whose Friendly Aid Every Line in this Book Was Written." Mr. Swope at that happy time was my boss on *The World*, which newspaper died February 28, 1931.

About that time Mr. Francis Hackett wrote "The Invisible Censor." It was written "To My Wife, Signe Toksvig, Whose Lack of Interest in this Book Has Been My Constant Desperation." Onspired by this candor, I did a few mythical offerings, such as "To My Daughters, Spenda and Blowa, But for Whose Extravagant Idleness I Should Not Have Had to Write this Unworthy Novel."

Of course, my four children hadn't been born when I wrote those fictitious dedications. I am now not particularly hard at work on another book, which I may dedicate "To Certain Schools and Colleges, in the Hope that the Royalties on this Book Will Be Enough to Defray What I Still Owe these Four Institutions."

I actually did dedicate a book to my wife. It was "Half a Loaf," (Doubleday, Page & Co., 1927), and it was consecrated "To Esther, Who Continually Urges Me to Write More —and More." And in 1932, I dedicated "Christopher Columbus" (Viking, 1932) to

To Anthony and Timothy, my
beautiful boys;
To all my readers, Yids and Goys;
To every critic, saint or crook;
To anybody who buys this book;
To everybody who wishes it success;
Meaning me and The Viking Press.

I have some in reserve. Such as:

I hurl at you this lovely book;
At your unbrainful head I shy it.
For, oh you parsimonious crook,
You'd never buy it.

And I wrote this, if I write another book, and if I feel as I do this spring afternoon:

Not any line, my love, nor letter
Within this book but might be better.
Yet were mine every written line
Than man hath ever done more fine,
Richer than man will ever do,
Still would be too poor for You.

Some of these dedications might be litigious. But seriously, as the orator said who hadn't made any change at all, I'd better dedicate my forthcoming book "To William Shakespeare, from whose Attorneys I Am Unlikely to Hear in the Morning."

—FRANKLIN P. ADAMS.



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## Belles-Lettres.

*Just as each generation of publicists and historians reinterprets the past in the light of the realities and illusions of its own moment, each generation of critics reevaluates literature according to its own standards. A recently published volume, "Theory of Literature," by René Wellek and Austin Warren, which Professor Jones reviews below, is an invaluable compendium of the yardsticks critics and historians are currently applying. Another volume of this type is the Johns Hopkins symposium, "Lectures in Criticism." This week's books include also several examples of contemporary criticism at work on individual writers. Mark Van Doren's judicious and beautifully written "Nathaniel Hawthorne" is a worthy addition to the important new American Men of Letters Series. Also notable are a symposium on Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard D. Altick's life of the Cowden Clarkes.*

# *The Manse and the Wayside*

*NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. By Mark Van Doren. New York: William Sloane Assoc.* 1949. 285 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by NEWTON ARVIN

HERE at last, with this third volume in the American Men of Letters Series, is a Hawthorne in whom one can believe; here, indeed, is a Hawthorne who is not only credible but whom one understands appreciably better than one did before Mr. Van Doren wrote his book. Hawthorne has been presented to us, in recent years, in various incredible guises; he has been presented as an average, colorless citizen of New England who held two or three minor offices under Democratic Administrations, but who cannot be imagined as having written a tale, let alone a novel; he has been presented as the animating center of a network of intrigue and conspiracy that suggests, not the Manse or the Wayside, but some Parisian or Muscovite spirit-vault crowded with anarchists.

Mr. Van Doren, writing sensitively and subtly in the key of the subject itself, is guilty of neither of these arrant misreadings: he knows, though it is by no means the heart of his knowledge, that Hawthorne was not a "normal" pillar of society, but a very specially gifted man of imagination, and that in natural consequence his real life was a strange, irregular, and troubled one; but he knows, too, that the strangeness and the trouble were largely inward, and that outwardly Hawthorne's life was singularly free from sensational or even very picturesque events.

It had, nevertheless, the most marked and personal character of its own: a character that suggests that of no other American writer and in fact no other American person, except of course in certain large and representative traits; and no one has ever evoked that character, as by painting a portrait, more delicately or more truthfully than Mr. Van Doren has done. It is not that he has any "theory" about Hawthorne: strictly speaking, I should say he has none at all. He has only a very strong and luminious sense of the kind of man Hawthorne was—a curious mixture of tenderness and coldness, of intensity and indolence, of personal withdrawness and shrewd practicality, of diffidence and a rocklike immovableness—and he succeeds to admiration in conveying this sense to us without ever insisting on or italicizing it. There is no parade of ostentatious "research" or obtrusive erudition; yet in fact all the most recent knowledge about Hawthorne has been incorporated, inconspicuously and as if effortlessly, into the fabric of Mr. Van Doren's narrative, and the result is a book that has its own quality—and a genuinely Hawthornesque quality—as a composition.

It is quite as largely critical as it is narrative; indeed, in the end, it is essentially a criticism of Hawthorne's work to which a good deal of biography has been made to contribute. Criticism of the sort it is could hardly be less perfunctory, more alert, awake, and attentive than Mr. Van Doren's: nothing is taken for granted, and no piece of Hawthorne's work, not even the slightest sketch, slips past Mr. Van Doren's eye in careless companionship with some other piece to which it may bear an apparent resemblance but which in fact is of a quite unequal quality. "Young Goodman Brown" seems to him one of the things that Hawthorne never, in kind, exceeded; "The Great Stone Face" on the other hand he quite properly describes as "very worthy, very noble" but "embarrassingly unreal." The conventional

**THE AUTHOR:** Mark Van Doren was recently startled to find himself hung in *Life*'s gallery of distinguished "dupes and fellow-travelers." The feature implied, at least by editorial juxtaposition, group support of the Waldorf "peace conference"—a conclave which he had refused to sponsor or attend because "to me it was a meaningless sort of protest and special pleading. . . . My interest is in world government. Communism bores me, but I don't happen to be afraid of agreeing with it about something. I don't think liberal people can afford to be scared back into the bushes—forced to worry about what they are going to say. I think that this is what they were really trying to do. I am free to admit that I am a rather radical person, but why isn't everyone? I was for Wallace. I have signed anti-Franco stuff and so on, and I'll continue to." Otherwise the papers he's signed are not regarded as especially inflammatory: nine volumes of poetry, of which "Collected Poems" won the 1940 Pulitzer Prize; compendiums of American and British literature; critical studies of Thoreau, Dryden, and Shakespeare; three novels, and a few juveniles. He lives in Greenwich Village, does his research winters while teaching English at Columbia, and writes summers at a Cornwall, Connecticut, farm which keeps him from nostalgia for his native Illinois soil. There he also accumulates enough exercise to stay lean the rest of the year, and still boyish-looking despite the scrim of fifty-five years. His next book will probably be a compilation of short stories, some of which are based on single-sentence ideas in Hawthorne's notebooks. Years ago his mother gave him a set of Hawthorne, and "it's been in my gizzard ever since. . . . When Sloane's American Men of Letters Series was begun—I'm on the editorial board—I picked him without question. I feel quite identified with him."—R. G.



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judgment is that none of the other three romances Hawthorne wrote achieved anything like the richness of tragic feeling or the intensity of formal perfection which "The Scarlet Letter" achieved; quite untroubled by the fact that this *is* the conventional judgment, Mr. Van Doren recurs to it as the true one, and he is right. This does not keep him from doing very sensitive justice to the other three finished novels or from giving an extremely interesting account of the abortive romance—or was it romances?—that Hawthorne left unfinished at his death. Criticism of this writer's beautiful—if undeniably wavering and variable—work may, as time goes on, be more laborious and more intensive than Mr. Van Dorens; it seems unlikely ever to be juster.

*Newton Arvin, professor of English at Smith College, is the author of "Hawthorne" and compiler of "The Heart of Hawthorne's Journals" and "Hawthorne's Short Stories."*

# *For Every Learned Library*

*THEORY OF LITERATURE. By René Wellek and Austin Warren. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1949. 403 *pp.* $4.50.

Reviewed by
HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THE study and teaching of the modern languages (including English) and their literatures has become a minor industry in the United States. The Modern Language Association numbers 6,000 scholars. Innumerable other persons are found in the National Council of Teachers of English, various other pedagogical groups, and folk-lore, philological, and associated societies. All this arises mainly because, in American colleges, a beginning course in English is the only universally required course, with foreign languages a second; and the teachers of these courses have to rise in the professional world. In activity, therefore, American literary scholarship leads the universe. But its quality is more debatable.

In "Theory of Literature," Messrs. Wellek and Warren have produced an admirable *vade mecum* of academic scholarship. They have read, digested, and listed everything that has to do with the theory and practice of this mystery. Five chapters survey "definitions and distinctions." Five others analyze theories about literature and biography, psychology, society, ideas, and the other arts. Eight survey the "intrinsic" study of literature—how do you analyze form, style, meter, image, figure, genre? How do you write literary history? Finally there is a plea—the inevitable plea—for a reform of graduate instruction.

An astonishing amount of information is cleanly packed into this cyclopedia. I do not see how complex material can be more clearly organized, more succinctly put, or more objectively analyzed—up to the last chapter, which is a plea for change. This book is going to be in every learned library.

If a layman, if a practising writer, if an ordinary reader opens its pages, however, such a one will be filled with astonishment. It is impossible, he will think, that the business of reading should produce this forest of technological processes, this accumulation of difficulties about poetry and prose. Books are for leisure, for escape, for simple pleasure. By and large, he will say, these scholarly arguments have nothing to do with my reading, or with the reading habits of most Americans. Before the scholar, irritated by philistinism, replies that scholarship is a normal human activity, before he loftily announces he is somehow improving taste, let me flatly observe that the ordinary reader is right. The pleasures of books, except for a small, self-conscious minority in the colleges, are mainly simple and direct.

But the business of scholarship ignores not only this fact, it ignores also the truth that scholars keep alive by teaching. The true dilemma is therefore not whether literature "reflects society," the problem is whether "scholarship" as admirably mirrored in this volume, is ever going to recognize the simple fact that these elaborate theories are in the main irrelevant to the total social demand. That demand is, briefly, to teach rather simple youngsters rather simple things. To this purpose the present volume is irrelevant. There is no reason why it should be relevant. But irrelevant it is.

The book, says its jacket, marks "an important milestone in the theory of graduate training." With all deference, it does nothing of the sort. What it does superbly is to sum up an epoch of concentration. But if democracy is to have any culture, we must now enter an epoch of diffusion, and for this epoch no *vade mecum* of any intellectual eminence has as yet appeared.

# *Belles-Lettres Notes*

*LECTURES IN CRITICISM, by Blackmur, Croce, Peyre, Ransom, Read, Tate. [Bollingen Series XVI.] Pantheon.* $3.50. The six lectures in this volume were delivered at a symposium held at Johns Hopkins a year ago. In the introduction Huntington Cairns states its general problem: an inquiry into the bases of modern criticism. John Crowe Ransom's paper on Aristotle and Allen Tate's on Longinus reexamine the two great documents of classical criticism. Herbert Read, in a heavily annotated paper, traces the influence on Coleridge's criticism of his intense interest in philosophy and metaphysics. Henri Peyre's discursive paper looks ahead to the future, asking critics to devote themselves to writers of their own time, and Benedetto Croce's contribution, "The Condition of Criticism in Italy," looks to the past, really, for it is mostly about the forerunners to his own theory of esthetics. Finally, R. P. Blackmur's "A Burden for Critics" calls for modern criticism to enlarge its scope, and to add to analysis, elucidation, and comparison the important function of judgment based on rational standards. The level of these papers varies. At their best they flash with acute insights into critical matters at their worst they are exhibits of what is wrong with criticism today.

*IMMORTAL DIAMOND: STUDIES IN GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS, edited by Norman Weyand, S.J. Sheed & Ward.* $5. These eleven studies are devoted to one of the most original and powerful "modern" poets, whose astonishing poems were published in 1918, thirty years after his death. The approach here is frankly partisan, sometimes parochial, for all the contributors are, like Hopkins, members of the Society of Jesus, and their exegesis bears the mark of their earnest calling. The best (and longest) study is that by Walter J. Ong, which traces with admirable clarity and objectivity the sources of the poet's elaborate technique in traditional English poetry. Martin C. Carroll's account of Hopkins as a practising Jesuit is useful too, as is Raymond V. Schoder's glossary of "difficult words." Three papers are explications of poems, one of them the famous "The Windhover." When F. R. Leavis wrote that "it expresses not religious exaltation, but inner debate," he was supported by the prior analyses of Richards and Empson. Fr. Schoder attempts to reverse that judgment, but he fails to convince, in spite of his ingenuity, because one feels that his



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conclusions are too rigidly predetermined. Supplementary material in the volume includes a detailed bibliography and indexes.

*OSCAR WILDE, by André Gide. Translated by Bernard Frechtman. Philosophical Library.* $2.75. This slight book contains a short essay by Gide published in 1905 in "L'Hermitage" and a two-page "In Memoriam" (1901) published in his "Prétextes." They are written with his customary economy and expressiveness, and are important for presenting at first hand impressions and conversations of Wilde. Yet they seem familiar, *réchauffés*. The reason for this is that Wilde repeated himself, so that the *dicta* appear also in his own writings; and the impressions have been used by his biographers or similarly noted by other friends. Besides, Gide uses these materials elsewhere, in his "Journals" and in his autobiographical "If It Die . . ." (where he relates more candidly their association in Biskra). If this sensitive translation does not add much to our comprehension of Wilde, it serves to remind us that Gide shared some of his ideas; that Gide is, in fact, the only living writer of importance whose roots are in the same soil of the *fin de siècle* that nourished the author of "Dorian Gray."

*THE COWDEN CLARKES, by Richard D. Altick. Oxford.* $4.50. It is easy to understand why two lives so intimately entwined as those of Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke should be treated in one biography. In their long literary and marital partnership they knew many important writers, including Keats, Lamb, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and Dickens. Their own prolific and popular writings cover a wide range, but Mrs. Clarke is remembered today as the first compiler of a Shakespeare concordance and as a great popularizer of "the Bard," whom she converted into an admirable Victorian gentleman with heroines as proper as seminary misses.

Professor Altick's book is first rate in every respect. He treats his subjects with a neat proportion of affection, humor, and objectivity, and his chapters on their Bardolatry—Mrs. Clarke even dreamed about Shakespeare—are soundly hilarious. He has carefully utilized masses of printed and unpublished source material, and provided notes, bibliographies, and an index. It is a valuable study, demonstrating perhaps that the "form and pressure" of an age—the *pax Victoriana* in this case—can be clearly felt in its minor figures.

—ROBERT HALSBAND.

**Fiction.** *It has been a long time since we have been able to read the translation of a modern Russian novel that did not seem to be stilted or a clumsy vehicle for propaganda. Vera Panova's "The Train" is free of excrescences. It is a good book to read while the propaganda battle still rages. Three other books this week may give pleasure to the reader. There is Arthur Meeker's "Prairie Avenue," a story of two generations of Chicago exuberance in the fabulous days of the Nineties. "The Husband," by Natalie Anderson Scott, is a psychological masterpiece of morbid obsession and spiritual debasement in Puritan New England two centuries ago. Joyce Cary, the author of "To Be a Pilgrim," is too little known to this country. His novel tells of two generations of English country life as seen through the eyes of an old man.*

# *Scene: Chicago, 1885-96*

*PRAIRIE AVENUE. By Arthur Meeker. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.* 1949. 325 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by EDMUND FULLER

POLISHED craftsmanship and a meticulous attention to detail characterize Arthur Meeker's new novel, "Prairie Avenue." It has a muted quality, is oblique and generally understated. A certain portion of the Chicago scene between 1885 and 1896, the most important of the years the book spans, is recreated with intense life and authenticity.

Prairie Avenue, in the Nineties, was the grand street of the Chicago rich. They were a set of great wealth, but lacking a tradition or culture deep rooted enough to set up a reliable canon of taste. All were rather newly rich: a class of great merchants, meat kings, wheat kings. Their wealth was bound to the factors that had made the huge, crude city flourish from an unpromising railhead.

—*Maurice Seymour.*

**Arthur Meeker — "His is the polish. Dreiser's was the depth."**

The architecture of the street was its own commentary. "A balconied Venetian *palazzo* stood next a German gingerbread house with gargoyles on the roof, while a red brick Queen Anne mansion, a Byzantine fortress, and a Renaissance castle (all fancy gray stone embroidery) made an oddly assorted trio over the way." The inhabitants of these dwellings looked to the East as the social arbiter; sometimes still further beyond to England and Europe, where money could buy titled marriages for a generation scarcely one remove from the raw frontier.

The boy Ned Ramsay, twelve years old when the book begins, had grown up in the fluctuating fortunes of a speculator's family. Periods of lavish and princely living, in Europe and America, alternated with times of penury and occasional discreet, hasty removals from one place to another.

As the result of a particularly abrupt setback he was left to live for several years in the home of his Uncle Hiram and Aunt Lydia Stack on Prairie Avenue. This family, parents and children alike, took him to its bosom with genuine affection.

Ned, happy though he was, possessed a sensitivity and perception that led him to increasing awareness of the odd factors in the marriage of his uncle and aunt. The Stack lumber fortune was massive enough to overcome any social sniping; nevertheless, some of the sharp-tongued went to the length of whispering that Hiram Stack had found his regal and beautiful wife in a "house."

Such details were lost on the boy. But he was not blind to the implications of things he saw pass between Aunt Lydia and the merchant Abner Kennerley, rival to the Fields, whose house looked like the Paris Opera. And Ned, alone, knew the secret that



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lay behind the tragedy that engulfed his Uncle Hiram.

In the Kennerley house, too, the lavish and the tragic were mixed. The strange, childish Southern wife, Corinne, went one way to destruction; her son and daughter, in very different ways, were to do likewise. Ned watched the methodical, inevitable progression of these younger lives, as well; his objectivity pierced by his own emotional tie to the self-possessed, poised, but lost Celia.

Book One is beautifully wrought and self-contained. The interplay of happy childhood with the background of adult tension and tragedy is well controlled. The remaining portions of the book are no less well done, perhaps, but they become less immediate, less compelling. The unity that is so large a factor in the effectiveness of Book One is unavoidably lost. As Ned watches the carry-over of tragedy to the second generation we are not as fully persuaded that things must be so and no other way.

Aunt Lydia is an effective creation, if perhaps revealed just a bit too little. Her friend Uncle Rock is somewhat the equivalent of "dear old Charlie" in "Strange Interlude." It is his reluctant role to be faithful comrade, instead of lover. Ned, as central figure and observer, is a distinct entity as a boy. When we meet him as man he is more of a conventional figure, less firm of outline.

There is a quality of reality in this re-creation of Chicago that makes me think of that other realistic Chicago of "Sister Carrie." Aunt Lydia is a kind of veiled Carrie who arrived on another track. But Mr. Meeker's canvas is more limited, more specialized in its concentration upon a single social segment. His is the polish. Dreiser's was the depth.

# *Stalin Prize, First Class*

*THE TRAIN. By Vera Panova. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.* 1949. 281 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by JOHN WOODBURN

THE JACKET of this novel bears the information that in 1946 it received the Stalin Prize, First Class. This resounding *nihil obstat* also carried with it an award of 100,000 roubles, $20,000 to you, an amount which, in this country, would put Miss Panova in the category of Capitalist, Second Class. This is much more money than a few authors I know of, who wrote better books than "The Train," made from their work in that year, and it is also considerably less than was made by some others who wrote very bad books indeed.

I must say that a careful reading of Vera Panova's prize novel of a Soviet hospital train during the recent war failed to reveal any passages which might conceivably incite the most impressionable American reader to set about overthrowing the government or, for that matter, to picket Mr. Alfred Knopf's offices. There is, now that I recall it, on pages 233-235, a scene in which a pretty young nurse named Vaska goes to a beauty parlor in a stop-over town and has her hair curled "in tight little sausages," her finger nails stained red, and her eyebrows removed and new ones painted on—a savage custom practised by the women of our American tribes, the infiltration of which seemed to me to portend, if not a serious crack in the Soviet armor, at least a sizable rent in the Iron Curtain. However, since everybody concerned in the scene seemed highly pleased with the result, and since Mr. Stalin apparently saw fit to *stet* it, I see no reason why I should say more about it.

While "The Train" is a novel by a Russian author about Russia, and as such is *sui generis*, it is also almost unique in that it presents neither the highly moralistic tone which pervaded the Russian novel of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, nor the intense, sans-culotte chauvinism and propagandism which has characterized so much of Soviet literature since the Revolution. "The Train" is simply a warm, humanistic, occasionally sentimental montage of the lives of a group of ordinary people which could, without a great deal of transposition, have been set in almost any other country during a time of war. There is no particular hero or heroine, and the train itself, the shining, proudly-tended hospital train which rolled back and forth between the front-lines and the base hospitals throughout the war, becomes itself perhaps the real protagonist. The characters make their appearances one by one, a heterogeneous group of men and women thrown together by the violent gust of war, ordinary, run-of-the-mill people for the most part, some skilled, others offering no more than their eager awkwardness: Danilov, the political officer, a quiet, self-contained, and disappointed man who wears his responsibility as consciously as he wears his uniform; the gentle Dr. Belov, still, after all the years, freshly in love with his big-boned, dowdy wife; the vain, complacent Dr. Suprugov, a spoiled and selfish middle-aged child, and Julia Dmitriyevna, the aging spinster who worked with passionate efficiency in the tiny operating room and loved Dr. Suprugov as simply, as timidly as a high-school girl. As the train runs back and forth and the maimed, mutilated, soldiers crowd its bloody corridors, all these scattered people merge, finally, into an increasingly efficient, selfless coordination which becomes the Staff. When the war was over and the group dispersed, it was the same heterogeneous cluster of people who left the train and scattered to resume their lives, and yet each one, without knowing it, was not the same; the experience, shared and distributed, had touched and changed them all, indelibly.

Vera Panova has told this story with quiet competence in an unobtrusive style which, I fear, has not been at all times enhanced by the translation ("The article produced a big impression in the train"). If it has no great distinction as a novel, it has the virtues of warmth and sincerity, and an unaffected approach to the lives of ordinary people. Miss Panova does not say: this is the incomparable Russian people performing feats of superheroism for the glory of the State. She says merely: these are people, people who are sometimes vain and frightened and irritable and petty, and sometimes inconspicuously brave and enduring, doing something which made them feel useful and important and which, for a time, wholly filled their lives.

## FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 305

*A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 305 will be found in the next issue.*

FPLPAC ERF MNSH CPK

TNDHX RASNEH GBRF

CPKXDHOW.—ENEHXP

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*Answer to Literary Crypt No. 304*

He who confers a benefit on any one loves him better than he is beloved.

—ARISTOTLE.



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# *Manacled by a Wedding Ring*

*THE HUSBAND. By Natalie Anderson Scott. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1949. 270 pp. $3.*

Reviewed by ANN F. WOLFE

IF YOU value your comfort of mind, you will read this book only in broad daylight, preferably on a sunny morning. Finish it, at least, long before your bed hour, giving yourself time to shake off the seeping horror that must otherwise infiltrate your sleep and harass your dreams. "The Husband" is a psychological Grand Guignol so subtly and insidiously staged as to show up the average crime story as a clumsy bit of bloodletting *pour le sport.*

The framework of this psychological masterpiece is innocent enough. In Puritan Massachusetts two centuries back Mr. Ebenezer Rawson takes Cassie Harris to wife. With the fresh high-heartedness of youth Cassie faces the problem of adjusting herself to married life in Lansbury, the town where her husband is a respected leading citizen. Inasmuch as the marriage effects few changes in Mr. Rawson's pattern of living, it is the young wife who must carry the burden of making the new relationship successful and happy. Despite financial privation and the hardships involved in rearing a family, Cassie's love for her husband grows until it becomes the most abject form of enslavement.

The status of woman being what it was in Puritan New England, there is little, externally at any rate, that is unique about Cassie's married life. Hers was not the only wedding ring, 200 years ago or since, to turn manacle. In Lansbury there are other women who lose girlish lightness of step and heart in the routine drudgery of wifehood and motherhood. True, no other Lansbury husband can smile and smile like Mr. Rawson and be a villain. On the other hand, some of Cassie's women neighbors have to put up with stingy mates given to slipping out by night to "the ordinary" and the robust companionship of red-shoed wenches.

What gives Mrs. Scott's new novel significance is the gradual debasement of Cassie's spirit under the compulsions of devotion to the whited sepulchre she gratefully calls husband. I cannot recall ever reading so exquisitely hideous a history of spiritual debauchment. Preying on Cassie's kindly trusting nature, Mr. Rawson corrupts her wholesome love for him into a morbid obsession. His is a refined and delicate vampirism that imperceptibly drains the sweetness and freedom of a woman's soul, to say nothing of draining the material substance of her parents' small savings.

Under the guidance of the immaculately ruched Rawson hand Cassie becomes a cruel shrew, a groveling, self-righteous creature who rationalizes her husband's tyranny and lives only to scheme for his personal comfort and his occasional physical favors. Here, in very truth, is a step-by-step study in killing with kindness—the *with* of accompaniment, not instrumentality. The latter would have been delicious martyrdom, delicious beyond Cassie's most sensual dreams.

There is no question about it: Mrs. Scott has extraordinary virtuosity in novelizing the psychic progression of evil. She integrates into sinister unity the contrapuntal motifs of husbandly domination and wifely subjection. She weaves Puritan overtones into her harrowing symphony—memories of witchcraft, pictures of stock and gibbet, exemplars of religious hypocrisy, glances into warped hearts that seek emotional release in public punishments and executions. She signals the stages of Cassie's psychological descent to Avernus by such simple notes as the metamorphosis of attitude toward Esmeralda and Timothy, or Mr. Rawson's predilection for blue as the prerogative of brides.

As for the climax—women readers will find themselves defensively clutching their throats.

*—Robert Campbell Barry.*

**Natalie Anderson Scott — virtuosity with "the psychic progression of evil."**

# *Murder in Africa*

*PORT AFRIQUE. By Bernard Victor Dryer. New York: Harper & Bros. 1949. 237 pp. $2.50*

Reviewed by VICTOR P. HASS

BERNARD VICTOR DRYER, who looks like Beau Geste but is a cancer specialist and who writes in a manner reminiscent of some of Graham Greene's best "entertainments," proves in these pages that the first novelist need not use entirely new materials for his maiden flight.

The ingredients of "Port Afrique" are well worn—though they have worn well—but such is Mr. Dryer's skill as a teller of tales that these ingredients are burnished so brightly that they give the appearance of being brand new.

Readers of "suspense thrillers" will recognize the mixture: the sleepy African coastal town, the philosophical chief of police with his exquisite manners, the apparently faithful and certainly beautiful young wife who has just been bumped off, the intense and adoring young husband who refuses to believe it was suicide, the "other woman" riddled with hate and jealousy, the weakling husband of that other woman, the hunt, the denouement, the dramatic climax. In literary form the story usually is given a sultry title like "Port Afrique"; when it reaches the screen it is generally called "Casablanca" or "Algiers." It has been told hundreds of times.

Mr. Dryer has told it once again in "Port Afrique" and it is the measure of his success that he has made it not only interesting but exciting despite the fact that the veteran whodunit reader is bound to spot the stinker midway of the yarn.

The opening is a setting that Mr. Alfred Hitchcock probably can trot out of a movie-lot warehouse tomorrow morning though it may need a bit of retouching, so often has it been used. You remember it: the tramp freighter plowing through the night, the single figure silhouetted on the deck. Then the tying to the dock and the bright lights playing on upturned faces and the single figure walking down the gangplank.

The lone figure, in this case, is Rip Reardon, much-decorated American soldier returning to his home in French Africa. Fresh out of an Army hospital, Rip has been summoned home because Georgette, his gorgeous wife, had been found dead some days



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before. "Suicide," said chess-playing Colonel Jacques Moussac, commandant of the gendarmes, failing to mention some mysterious X-rays he had stashed away in a secret file. "Suicide, hell," said Rip.

So—just like in the fillums, Mamie—Rip goes on a tear and then goes home to his lonely plantation house plastered to the eyebrows. There he finds the luscious Ynes, who looks like Georgette and is even wearing one of the dead wife's dressing gowns. Rip doesn't understand but he's drunk and lonely and she is lovely and the house is empty so they go into one of those scenes usually denoted by asterisks, but Mr. Dryer skips the asterisks and gives you the gamey details.

Next morning, remorseful and savage, Rip turns bloodhound and starts to unravel the whole nasty business. The trail leads into many dark corners where a variety of instruments blunt and otherwise are wielded with varying success, pauses long in a flashy bordello operated by a sleazy character yclept Nino, runs into a straightaway where the odor of blackmail is singularly oppressive, stops in Moussac's private office for a look at those X-rays, and then hightails it into the jungle, where, in the last reel, Rip finds all the answers he was looking for and a few others he hadn't counted on. I do no more than borrow from the advertising the movie people will unquestionably use when I tell you the wind-up is terrific. I kept seeing Mr. Humphrey Bogart, the muscle man, as Rip and I strongly suspect that Mr. Dryer kept seeing him, too. Oddly, though, Moussac kept coming to me as Maxime Weygand.

Trite as all of this sounds, Mr. Dryer has made it considerably better than average mystery fare. He has a way with situations that wrings the last drop of suspense from them and a way with characters—even those straight out of stock—that makes them seem original even though the faces do remain vaguely familiar. Best of all, he creates mood as Graham Greene creates it. Indeed, in the matter of Mr. Dryer's probing of Rip's embittered mind, Mr. Greene might well pick up a useful hint or two.

## *Outcast*

*ALIEN LAND. By Willard Savoy. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1949. 320 pp. $3.*

Reviewed by ANN PETRY

"ALIEN LAND," by Willard Savoy, is a first novel, and a very good one. It is written with passion and with anger, so that it has a vitality which makes it linger in the mind. Reduced to its simplest terms it is the story of a man's loss of the sense of personal dignity, a loss that began in his childhood, continued on through his adolescence, and into manhood; and of how he struggled to regain it. And finally did.

Kern Roberts, the hero, lived in two worlds—one white, the other Negro. He moved back and forth between these worlds, uncomfortable in both of them. His mother was white. His father, a Negro fair enough to pass for white, chose to live as a Negro. Kern grew up in Washington, D. C. He was a lonely, friendless child, learning about contempt and hatred when he should have been learning about love. But he testified against the Negro who murdered his mother, and he was never permitted to forget it. His teachers in the school "for colored" reminded him of the part he had played in the trial; his classmates called him a traitor; and his father made no effort to conceal his disapproval of the boy's testimony.

Later on he went to school in Vermont, where he passed for white. He was happy there until his classmates found out that he was a Negro; and then he left, embittered, cynical, determined to live as a Negro. Next he went to Valley View, a Negro college in the South. But he was so terrified by what he had seen and experienced there that he fled the place, made up his mind to live as a white man. And did. He became a successful radio script writer in New York. His life went along smoothly until he met and fell in love with Marianne, a white girl. He was afraid he'd lose her if he revealed his racial identity—but he told her anyway. She rejected him at first, and then decided to marry him.

The author, Willard Savoy, is a public-relations officer assigned to the Air Information Division of the United States Air Force. In this first book he has told an exciting story, filled with terror and violence. Occasionally he forgets that he is writing a novel and inserts a mile-long speech which suddenly, and disconcertingly, brings the action to a standstill. But when he returns to his story, the book is wonderfully alive, moving at a headlong pace.

"Alien Land" contains some unforgettable scenes: the inside of a Jim Crow train headed South, carrying students from the North "into an alien land—alien, they to it, and it to them"; the interior of a house in one of the narrow, dingy alleys in Washington, where a man has just lost his job; the discussion of the race problem in a barber shop, at a church meeting; the relationship between Negro customer and white shopkeeper in a small store south of the Mason-Dixon line.

In addition, Lieutenant Savoy has created a number of vivid, full-bodied characters: Jake, the master craftsman who loved the feel of wood; Kern's aunt Paula, who had the gift of laughter and yet died crying; and Nettie, the ignorant, vindictive maid-of-all-work who helped make Kern Roberts a lost and lonely child.

And so you should read "Alien Land" because it's a bang-up story. But you should also read it because it offers an unusual comment on the whole subject of race relations in the United States. The chances are that you won't be able to put it down until you finish it.

*Ann Petry's first book, "The Street," a novel of New York's Harlem, won a Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Award. Her latest work is "Country Place," the story of a New England town.*

## *Old Invalid's Days*

*TO BE A PILGRIM. By Joyce Cary. New York: Harper & Bros. 1949. 341 pp. $3.*

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

JOYCE CARY'S new novel has the traits that have made the long family chronicle an enduring record of English character and history. "I was a pilgrim only by race," writes the old dying man at the end of the story. "England took me with her on a few stages of her journey. She, poor thing, was born upon the road, and lives in such a dust of travel that she never knows where she is."

Old Tom Wilcher is in the process of dying all through the novel. His family, cousins, nieces, nephews, and their children, seize hold of him, for in the death of this ancient, twisted bachelor lies some security for all of them. Uncle Tom owns all of the family wealth that remains to the Wilchers, a dilapidated country house, a musty place in London, and some

(*Continued on page* 33)



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**U. S. A.** *In the days of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson it became fashionable to decry the fact that more young people of intelligence and education did not go into politics. Since then there has unquestionably been some improvement in this respect. As Hugh D. Scott, Jr., chairman of the Republican National Committee, suggests in his informative if purple-patched book, "How to Get Into Politics," reviewed below, politics offers opportunity to the career-seeker, seldom to the dilettante. . . . Because the American educational system is intimately linked with politics, if our citizens desire schools fit for our society, they must work for them through the ballot box. In "Crisis in Education" (also reviewed this week) Bernard Iddings Bell warns of fundamental weaknesses in our schools today and proposes some far-reaching correctives.*

# *ABC's of Politicking*

*HOW TO GO INTO POLITICS. By Hugh D. Scott, Jr. New York: John Day Co.* 1949. 197 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by GAEL SULLIVAN

THE HON. Hugh D. Scott, Jr., member of Congress from Pennsylvania and chairman of the Republican National Committee, has put together a right handy book, and those who are accustomed to the doom-shouting, horrendous handouts from Mr. Scott's Washington headquarters are in for more than a moderate surprise.

Nowhere in the slim volume is the death-knell of the New Deal sounded, nor are there any traces of a John T. Flynn-manufactured mish-mash on Roosevelt's responsibility for Pearl Harbor. The modesty and downright decorum displayed by Mr. Scott and the lack of inflammatory prose is little short of astounding, considering Mr. Scott's obvious partisan position.

The Representative from Pennsylvania, it would appear from this book, goes around with a copy of the "Practical Cogitator" or some similar compendium, as he has sprinkled his prose with salty sayings by Edmund Burke, Aristotle, Samuel Butler, and that noble Republican authority—Quintilian.

If you expect a dynamiting job or want to join the hate parade, this mild political primer is hardly your dish. Mr. Scott, in the most prosaic kindergarten manner, sets out to give valuable and sound information on how to join a political organization, the pitfalls of getting elected to office, the role of women in politics, and the changing modes in political toggery. Along the way he gives the ABC's of making a political speech, and Dale Carnegie has nothing on Mr. Scott when it comes to telling how to influence constituents and multiply votes. I would say that, generally, Mr. Scott's textbook could be used very profitably by both parties, particularly the young hopefuls who, in Scott's language, are wetting their political toes for the first time.

And speaking of Mr. Scott's language, we haven't been snarled in such a skein of purple patches and shredded words since we read Carl Van Vechten. In the 162 main pages of Mr. Scott's book we get, among others, "adjuration," "xenophobia," "heterogeneity," "pharisaical," and one that runs through our head even now —"infrangibility."

The book is free of any party propaganda. In fact, the two best quotes are by two staunch New Dealers—Robert Sherwood and Harold Ickes. Mr. Ickes deserves a special citation when he says: "Wars are the result of stupid statesmanship."

No one can impugn Mr. Scott's endeavor to write an objective and simplified book on how to get launched into the political arena. Only when Mr. Scott sets out to justify the filibuster does he show any political sleight-of-hand and a tendency toward indulging in mumbo-jumbo.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A SLIGHT COMBUSTION-MANIFESTED IN LIGHT, HEAT, FLAME-ALTERING AND DESTROYING EFFECTS-TO SOME EXTENT, ALMOST HARDLY, ETC.-
MUSSOLINI
U.S. STATE DEPT
WORLD CRISIS
DOUBLE TALK
STRIPED PANTS LINGO
PROTOCOL

—*Chicago Times, Inc.*

**"A Heck of a Way to Sound an Alarm."**

Mr. Scott makes no direct references to recent political events, but a few of his remarks are quite interesting in the light of current history. Examples: "Don't (italics mine) *underestimate* your opponent." "The better known public-opinion services have improved their techniques and have established reputations for (italics mine) *moderately* accurate results, (italics Scott's) *as of the time the poll is taken.*" "And don't be late for the meeting. They may be talking about you!" Mr. Scott does not discuss the recent gathering of the Republican National Committee at Omaha.

The Republican chairman spends considerable time describing the importance of precinct organization. When I was active in politics I spent much time doing the same. But on this point Mr. Scott and I find one very basic disagreement. He seems to feel that virtually *all* that decides an election is the personal efficiency of the precinct leader and the ward boss. I think that they are of great importance, but I don't believe that you can win a national election today without carrying the issues to the people and convincing them that your stand on the issues is for the best interests of most of the people.

It seems to me that discussion of the technique of presentation of the issues is strikingly absent from Mr. Scott's book. Truman traveled over 30,000 miles, made more than 300 speeches—punching all the way, and the people listened. Dewey, ducking the issues with his pastoral pleadings, was counted out at the crossroads.

Those who remember the self-revealing portraiture of Charlie Michelson's "The Ghost Talks" and Ed Flynn's hard, practical handbook "You're the Boss," will find little approaching these intimate revelations in Chairman Scott's politics-in-ten-easy-chapters.

The reader will gain helpful rudimentary knowledge of how a political organization is built up even though little is said about the hard realities of political succession. Sweating out the passing of some of the time-servers in offices sends too many bright young men over the hill. Mr. Scott knows as well as I do that the top echelons of party management are still minor politboros where new voices and new ideas are seldom heard or heeded. In one large city where the mean age of the entrenched office-



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holders is over sixty, the younger members refer to the self-perpetuated hierarchy as the "Wheelchair Government."

Mr. Scott somewhat overstates the case for party loyalty. Blind obedience to the party line may sometimes be disobedience to conscience. Our real political progress has come from political mavericks like Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Wilson, Norris, La-Follette, and Roosevelt, who departed from the sterility of party doctrine to infuse new life into the thinking of their times. They believed that standing up and being counted for some party leader's whim meant lying down and saying nothing for humankind.

*Gael Sullivan is former executive director of the Democratic National Committee.*

# *Our Dangerous Juvenility*

*CRISIS IN EDUCATION: A Challenge to American Complacency. By Bernard Iddings Bell. New York: Whittlesey House.* 1949. 237 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by H. A. OVERSTREET

THIS is a wise and frightening book. It tells us that we are unable to help our children grow up because we ourselves are not grown up. By "we" the author means (most) parents, teachers, ministers, politicians, businessmen—citizens in general. His thesis is that our immature society is continually and dangerously perpetuating immaturity, particularly in those areas—the schools, colleges, universities, and homes—where one might expect that helping young people to grow into maturity of mind and spirit would be the prime objective.

If one of our legislative investigating committees were to take a peek into this book, it would surely hale the author before its inquisitional body, demanding why he, a distinguished scholar bred in America, should so readily give aid and comfort to the ideological foes of his country. Here, the committee would say, is a poor way in which to prove that America is the impeccable savior of the world, and quote:

> The intention is to disturb a pseudo-patriotic complacency; to recall with alarm the cultural childishness revealed by current trends in journalism, by the radio, by our magazines of large circulation, and by our best-selling books, by the substitution of purchased amusement for recreation actively pursued, by the caliber of our drama and cinema, by mass response to emotionalized propaganda, by advertising which appeals chiefly to greed or to vanity, by the patent decay in good manners, by the spread of divorce and other manifestations of parental irresponsibility—by all the various aspects of behavior which indicate to a dispassionate student of human affairs the incompetence of a people and the insecurity of a civilization; to ask to what extent our educational theory and practice are responsible for the unsatisfactory state of our life and culture.

What the author says plainly and with documentation is that all is far from being well with American education. To be sure, he might have written a sociological treatise to prove that the illnesses of education spring from the illnesses of our society. This is a favorite way of beating the devil around the bush and letting him, in the end, go free. Dr. Bell goes directly at education itself. Our schools, colleges, universities, and homes are not giving the kind of education that creates a citizenry matured in mind and character and competent to take a difficult world in hand. We are all, of course, for a better education; but "much that calls itself 'education' . . . has gotten clear away . . . from doing what it is supposed to do." America, he believes, "is progressing toward uneducation, toward the prevention of education, toward injury to growing human beings, toward grave danger to cultural stability."

When the author says this, he does not have in mind some small group of educational innovators (who are usually made the scapegoat for our

# *Your Literary I. Q.*

**By Howard Collins**

SEASONS RETURN

A. C. Palmer, of Pomfret Center, Conn., offers twenty quotations about the changing seasons, which he invites you to match up with the names of the poets who wrote them. Allowing five points for each proper connection, a score of fifty is par, sixty is very good, and seventy or better is excellent. Answers are on page 31.

1. 'Tis a month before the month of May, And the spring comes slowly up this way. ( ) Browning
2. Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses, A box where sweets compacted lie. ( ) Bryant
3. When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces. ( ) Byron
4. In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove. ( ) Campbell
5. Oh for one hour of youthful joy! Give me back my twentieth spring! ( ) Carruth
6. The year's at the spring And the day's at the morn. ( ) Coleridge
7. When spring comes back with rustling shade And apple-blossoms fill the air. ( ) Cowper
8. They whose hearts are dry as summer dust Burn to the socket. ( ) Herbert
9. Eternal summer gilds them yet, But all, except their sun, is set. ( ) Holmes
10. 'Tis the last rose of summer, Left blooming alone. ( ) Hood
11. You shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland. ( ) Milton
12. 'Twas in the prime of summertime, An evening calm and cool. ( ) Moore
13. Some of us call it Autumn, And others call it God. ( ) Noyes
14. Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks In Vallombrosa. ( ) Seeger
15. Thou blossom bright with autumn dew, And colored with the heaven's own blue. ( ) Shakespeare
16. Dark as winter was the flow of Isar, rolling rapidly. ( ) Shelley
17. O Winter, ruler of the inverted year! ( ) Stevenson
18. In winter I get up at night And dress by yellow candle-light. ( ) Swinburne
19. No enemy here shall he see But winter and rough weather. ( ) Tennyson
20. If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? ( ) Wordsworth



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iniquities). He has in mind "current American education as a whole."

This is a pretty severe indictment. If it is true, we are indeed in a bad way. We need to look into our educational institutions—the great white hope of our democracy—and estimate what they are doing to our children.

Dr. Bell speaks with a double authority: that of a man who for many years has known and practised education in most of its phases, and that of a mind singularly gifted to winnow chaff from wheat. The book is mind-arousing, particularly in its discussion of the grave lack of education in fundamental life outlook. "Those who control our universities and colleges, like most other people, seem only vaguely aware that Western civilization can no longer run along on inertia, that it is in crisis, that it needs morally sound guidance, must have such guidance or perish."

In two penetrating chapters Dr. Bell discusses the need for religion in education. What he says about teaching religion—*religion*, not creed—is to this writer sound and urgent. His description of "Religious Emphasis Week" at the University of Suburbia is a piece of mordant irony that needs to be read by every teacher in a university and by every parent.

When, however, in his despair at getting religion taught, he advocates time out for religious instruction by the various clergy of the various ecclesiastical institutions, and even Federal aid for the support of religious schools, he confuses religion and creed. To have religion taught "as a part of the race's experience" and as still part of man's necessary equipment for living is one thing; to have it taught by those who are committed to their special creedal forms is vastly different, and possibly dangerous.

Here in this book, however, is an honest, revealing effort to think our way through to the deeper crisis that underlies all the screaming headlines of our day: the crisis inherent in what he calls our "dangerous juvenility." I would note one further disagreement with Dr. Bell. Apparently he finds no hope in the present run of adults. "Unless maturity arrives by the age of thirty or so, and those in control are well over that, it can come, if at all, only by a miraculous intervention of the gods, intervention which seems too much to expect or ask. Our task is somehow to mature the rising generation; therein lies our hope."

He may be right; but there are those who are today hard at the job of giving adults the chance to keep mentally alive and growing—of extending that chance to more and more adults. Perhaps if we simply said that our task today is to mature every man-jack of a human being we can lay our hands on—including ourselves—we should come nearer the truth.

"Suppose there's any hope of the world being destroyed before final exams?"

## *Peace with Unions*

*PARTNERS IN PRODUCTION. By the Labor Committee of the Twentieth Century Fund, assisted by Osgood Nichols. New York: The Twentieth Century Fund.* 1949. 149 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by ORDWAY TEAD

IMPORTANCE can be of several kinds. There is the importance of new facts, and there is the importance of a fresh formulation of a problem. This book is important in the latter respect. It redefines the relationships actual and potential between the managers of industry and the labor unions with which they deal. Stated differently, it considers the problem of how the individual worker is to achieve "security, advancement, and dignity" while at the same time he may safely become more fully interested in production, in being truly willing to work in some kind of partnership relation.

That the actual dealings of managers and unions are today taking on a new and different character is a fact. Yet recognition of this fact is tardy and its implications for improved joint relations have therefore been inadequately explored.

It is the central theme of this study that a new mandate is now presented to move beyond the higgling over the division of the corporate income to an equal or greater concern for its creation. The very title—partners in production—gives the cue as to the center of attention. The intention is to analyze social psychological forces, not to present a blueprint of program. And the intention is realized ably if not eloquently.

The significance of this volume is in considerable part in its prophetic quality. Along with it should certainly be read the excellent factual studies now appearing under the auspices of the National Planning Association, entitled "The Causes of Industrial Peace." For in that succession of first-hand descriptions of peaceful joint relations in selected companies, the practice of collective dealing is depicted in detailed terms with the focus precisely on how it is that these companies have passed beyond a conflict climate to a cooperative one.

This study will realize the purpose for which it was written only if it achieves a reading among all sorts of citizens whose attitudes ultimately will go far to assure that an enlightened public interest gradually is expressed in the collective relationships of industry.



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# Music and the Dance.

*If anyone still doubts America's musical coming of age, let him contemplate Alfred Einstein's "The Italian Madrigal"—all three volumes of it. Twenty years ago a work of this magnitude would have rolled from the presses of Germany, Italy, or France, but hardly from New Jersey. Dr. Einstein's impressive tome comes at a time when early choral music is gaining more and more in popularity. "The Italian Madrigal," reviewed below, should find responsive readers among many amateur music makers in addition to students and teachers. . . . The dance as a native form of artistic expression has also come of age. It is young but extremely lusty. Edwin Denby's "Looking at the Dance" and Margaret Lloyd's "The Borzoi Book of Modern Dance" both serve to chronicle our burgeoning balletomania since De Basil introduced his three "baby ballerinas" to America in 1933.*

## *From Nijinsky to Shan-Kar*

*LOOKING AT THE DANCE. By Edwin Denby. New York: Pelligrini & Cudahy.* 1949. 432 pp. $4.

Reviewed by RUSSELL RHODES

RECALLING his early apprenticeship to journalism as an arbiter of music, George Bernard Shaw, with characteristic candor, bracketed his confession of ignorance of his subject with pride that he had freed music criticism of "pretentious twaddle," clarifying it for the average reader by deliberate vulgarization. Unlike Mr. Shaw, Edwin Denby is obviously steeped in his field—the dance; his critical views may not be flashed through the lightning of Shavian witticisms, but he strikes a middle ground in which judicial estimates are salted with felicitous colloquialisms.

"Looking at the Dance" is a collection of Denby's impressions of performances in ballet, the modern dance, and in Broadway shows from 1937 to 1947 as critic for the *New York Herald Tribune* and various magazines. Of all forms of art criticism, that of the dance is the most shadowy. It has for too long existed as the forgotten stepsister of music reviewing.

Denby, as outstanding a critic in this country as C. W. Beaumont and Arnold Haskell in England, does for the dance what William Winter, in his remarkable "The Wallet of Time," did for the theatre. Despite their fugitive character, his essays reproduce visions of Markova and Dolin in "Giselle," Agnes de Mille in "Tally-Ho," Danilova in "Coppelia," Toumanova in "The Three-Cornered Hat," Massine in "Capriccio Espagnol." But this is no book for beginners. Rather, it is a reward for perfect attendance by bright pupils and, as such, is a refresher course for postgraduate balletomanes. For them, it focuses the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House in the mind's eye.

Denby's peculiarly authoritative position owes much to his professional experience as a dancer in Europe before the war and, subsequently, as a choreographer, dance director, and operetta librettist in this country. His enthusiasms are heavily on the side of ballet. The first section of his book contains illuminating comment on dynamics, pantomime, and "intelligent" dancing as it appeals to the experienced dance lover. This, by itself, would be as dusty as dry leaves, but he clarifies it by saying that "a dancer's intelligence is shown by how interesting to look at she can make her body the whole time she is on stage." Performance, in other words.

Stylized movement, he notes, is "a quiz game, thrown in for variety"; interest in pantomime "becomes like that of a detective story." Markova, more than any other ballerina today, suggests the magical quality of featheriness. Denby makes an interesting aside on the "still moment" of flight as, for instance, executed by Nijinsky when he seemed transfixed in the air in his leap through the window in "Spectre de la Rose."

Denby hails the freshness of such American ballets as "Billy the Kid" and "Rodeo" for Westerns, "Fancy Free" for its superb vaudeville, Tudor's excursions into "story" ballet (but cautions on his getting weepy over themes of frustration), and the great contributions of George Balanchine, who has responded more to America's dance climate than any other artist from abroad, making his ballets "look like brilliant fun."

The critic does not dislike the modern dance but he is a bit uncomfortable before certain regimented groups who seem to derive no enjoyment from their own dancing. Martha Graham is applauded for her "emotional steadiness in projection." Watching her may not be "a balm for the spirit, but it's a great pleasure for the intelligence."

The complete expressiveness and *virtuoso* precision of Uday Shan-Kar, the decorative talents of Katherine Dunham, the flamenco abandon of Carmen Amaya ("She fought her train into place like a wild animal trainer."), the gay brashness of Jerome Robbins's inventions for Sono Osato in "On the Town," the rhythm of the Rockettes, the Balanchine-Stravinsky "Elephant Polka" of the circus (which "beat the Operahouse Gang at their own game"), an extraordinarily perceptive analysis of Nijinsky's style based on old photographs—these and much more are in Edwin Denby's parade for dance devotees.

Agnes de Mille's "Tally-Ho."

—*Photos by Alfredo Valente.*

Jerome Robbins's "Fancy Free."



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Mainly, he creates the illusion of attending a performance. Like a good reporter, he jettisons the mumbo-jumbo of what Grace Hartman calls "the dahnce," in favor of lively, direct copy.

*Russell Rhodes has written on the dance for a variety of publications including* The Dancing Times *of London, the* New York Morning Telegraph, *and* The Journal of Commerce.

## *New Brilliance*

*THE ITALIAN MADRIGAL. By Alfred Einstein. Princeton: Princeton University Press.* 1949. *Volumes I and II,* 887 *pp. Volume III (transcriptions of complete part songs),* 333 *pp.* $30.

Reviewed by
KATHLEEN O'DONNELL HOOVER

"NEW Brilliance for an Old Musical Culture" would have been a fitting subtitle for this work by one of the foremost musicologists of our day. Forty years of research have enabled Alfred Einstein not only to sift and synthesize a mass of extant information, but to view his subject from an elevation never before attained, and to add to it discoveries of inestimable value. He has reconstructed the political and social conditions in which the madrigal arose in Italy, journeyed to England, crossed to Europe through French and Burgundian intermediaries, and so returned to the land of its birth, where, after raising Italian music to world leadership, it finally was exhausted by its inner contradiction—the aim to achieve personal expression through an impersonal medium. He gives lucidity to his presentation of this material by including musical examples and a series of complete madrigals and compositions in related forms, covering the period from 1470 to 1650.

Living portraits of the madrigalists are created by a few documentary strokes, applied while evaluating their abundant output. Thus the blind Francesco Landini appears not only as a skilled poet, composer, instrumentalist, and singer, but as a musical esthetician who stunned his fourteenth-century audiences with his daring pronouncements. The return of the Papal See from Avignon to Rome in 1408 brought about an influx of Northern musicians into Italy; yet Dr. Einstein brings to view native figures who, while overshadowed by the foreign usurpers, contributed their talent and personality to the evolution of the madrigal to such an extent that the usurpers themselves changed in temper and taste and allowed the rigidity of their polyphony to give way to sensuous Italian sound.

Early in the sixteenth century, all variants of part song that marked formative phases of the madrigal altered in style. The urge for individual expression in every field of art led to a departure from the established arrangement—an upper voice supported by a bass, with two other voices supplying harmonic filling. Instead, four or more voices were given equal importance, their melodic lines being determined by the meaning of the text, which was modeled on the greatest works in Italian poetry. In short, the aristocratic madrigal was born. Its first masters were Philippe Verdelot, Costanzo Festa, and Jacques Arcadelt. The liveliness, elegance, and inner logic of Verdelot's compositions welled from his own nature; an almost feminine refinement in taste impelled Festa to the more facile texture of three voices interwoven with subtle delicacy; Arcadelt's integrity as man and artist resulted in a classic simplicity of style and a fidelity to the standard four voices that gave his scores a permanence rare in sixteenth-century music.

Dr. Einstein's study of the circle about these masters, and of the new

generation of poets that arose with them, brings us to two of his finest portraits: Adrian Willaert, model of all madrigalists of the sixteenth-century Venetian school, and Cipriano de Rore, who ended the Northern hegemony and achieved a new Italian supremacy. Musicological literature is enriched by the discussion of these bold colorists, in whose output the author sees the origins of the "romanticism" of Salvator Rosa and Monteverdi's somber dissonance. His analysis of the part played by Willaert's pupil Andrea Gabrieli, in the cult of riotous gaiety that swept Venice, and of the radicalism of Rore's spiritual heirs, Marenzio, Gesualdo, and Monteverdi, contains two highly illumining findings: Gabrieli's lighter works were the cradle of the *commedia dell' arte,* and the new directions in which the three radicals experimented led to the lyric stage and thus to the end of the madrigal.

Dr. Einstein has established that this restricted and artificial expression of humanism is artistically and historically as important as the purer forms that preceded it and the freer ones that have outlasted it. He has more than fulfilled his aim of clarifying a long neglected chapter in musical history, which his scholarly treatment unfolds as a golden age in Western civilization.

*Kathleen O'Donnell Hoover is an American musicologist and author of the recently published "Makers of Opera."*

## *Dance Book Notes*

*THE BALLET-LOVER'S COMPANION, by Kay Ambrose. Knopf.* $1.95. Miss Ambrose has subtitled her book "Esthetics Without Tears for the Ballet-Lover." The word "esthetics" covers much ground, and so, indeed, does this little study; but esthetics can wander off into hazy territory. When it does, the author goes with it, and at those times the book has more enthusiasm than organization. For the most part it is general rather than technical, though it presupposes a minimum of knowledge that the novitiate can obtain from books like Vaganova's "Fundamentals of the Classic Dance." Among the subjects covered by Miss Ambrose are chapters on the arms and legs, physical and stage perspective, partnering, line, style, and classification. The latter, which deals with the difference between classical (the author prefers the word "academic") and romantic ballet, is not too clear; and her remarks about the ballerina's solos in "Swan Lake"—which, according to her, "are not [intended] to evoke any particular mood or atmosphere"—are open to sharp dispute. Nevertheless this is a helpful, unpretentious book, full of hints, warnings, suggestions, admonitions, and good, practical advice for the student and incipient balletomane. The illustrations, drawn in ink by the author, are superior to most others of their genre.

*THE BORZOI BOOK OF MODERN DANCE, by Margaret Lloyd. Knopf.* $5. The subject of modern dance is something that can be as easily rationalized as the differences of opinion between Republicans and Democrats. Part of the public looks on it as an absolute manifestation of the Deity; others sneer. Margaret Lloyd, the dance reviewer of *The Christian Science Monitor,* has done valuable

(*Continued on page* 26)



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Published by The Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary.

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# A Mind of One's Own

LAST month's editorial "Bogus Best Sellers" stirred up a rumpus among publishers, booksellers, newspapers, and our own readers. We were deluged with telegrams and with letters from contributors expressing their gratitude or indignation, and proposing scores of ingenious and complicated devices to obtain weekly lists of best sellers that would not bring a blush to a statistician's cheek. There the matter rests on the eve of the most important event in book listings of the year, the Pulitzer Prize awards, which over the years has become a national institution worth a column or so in nearly every newspaper in the country.

In the midst of all this furor it had occurred to us that a good deal of the heat engendered by our criticism was actually the result of a deep-rooted and incoherent protest on the part of the public against the various means by which a few books were constantly, and by every device of publicity, prize awards, and advertising, forced on the public's attention at the expense of the rest of the thousands of volumes published during the year.

In spite of the apparent ease with which Americans are regimented, so that in the eyes of foreign critics we have been accused for half a century of looking alike and thinking alike, as if we were so many puppets controlled by strings held by invisible hands, as a people we are actually allergic to mass pressure when we are pushed too hard. We might dismiss the fact that in men, at least, clothing had become a kind of uniform, on the streets, in factories and farms, or that we smoke the same few brands of cigarettes, wash with the same soaps, eat the same breakfast foods, drive in the same cars. Why not, if these products of advertising are satisfactory and if it is more economical? But when it comes to stuffing our minds with the same literature and the same ideas, a more serious issue is involved.

THE TRUTH is that it is becoming more and more difficult to have thoughts and ideas of one's own; to say, "This I believe of my own free will and conscience." We are today subjected to pressures from a few almost irresistible sources. Our radios recite the same selected news in almost the same words hour after hour. In too many cities the morning and evening newspapers are controlled by the same owners and present us with local party lines. The three or four great news magazines with devilish ingenuity sum up the week's budget of opinions and may extinguish with their damp weight whatever sparks of free thought remain. The opinion polls, before the public thumbed its nose at them last November, told the people what they were thinking and therefore claimed to predict how they would act.

It has been far more difficult to regiment the realm of books and thus of ideas, for a man or woman can find every conceivable expression of personal tastes and prejudices in the public library or the bookstore. The increasing pressures that lead people directly and almost irresistibly to a few score of books have come about through no plot or conspiracy against the public welfare. It has simply been good business to underline the predestined best seller or to climb on the bandwagon when some unheralded offering made the grade. There are now some fifty book clubs, with the Book-of-the-Month Club, the Literary Guild, and the Dollar and the People's Book Clubs towering over the rest like four elephants regarding a herd of mice. For years publishers, booksellers, and the public have been uneasy about the clubs, and an occasional useless revolt against them stirs up momentary dust. The books chosen by the big clubs often become best sellers and head the reading lists month after month; in turn, the publisher with profits to spend perpetuates the title in his advertising. Nothing can be done about it, or perhaps should be done, since there is truth in the proverbial argument that a customer who is led by the nose into a bookstore may be seized by curiosity to buy a book of which he has never heard. He is pathetically like a child who, sent to buy the family groceries, is tempted by the devil to spend a dime on candy. Anyhow, it may be better for a man to read a book he doesn't like than none at all.

The increasing number of prizes and awards for books has the same hallucinating effect. In the end, you will buy one of these books that for months has been thrust into your mind by the hammer-blows of advertising and publicity whether you want to or not, so why not sign on the dotted line for three or four book clubs and get it over with at once? These yearly book prizes are not unintelligently granted or with the intention of putting another layer of frosting on the cake. It is doubtless simply an accident that so many of them have been selling like hot cakes for nearly a year before the judges cast their votes. Nor do we mean to imply that they are not usually superior products though even the towering Nobel Prize awards for literature have been known to betray a sad lack of judgment on somebody's part and the awards of the Pulitzer Foundation have usually been tied to the strings of morality, education, or public service, for the books that it would be good for us to read, rather than those in which we might perversely delight.

IN AN attempt to bring some diversity into what is too often a chorus of praise written on six or eight notes this magazine has used the nation's working book reviewers instead of a few judges. In the midst of the best-seller controversy we polled such a list of reviewers as an antidote to questioning bookstores or the publishers. While some of the top best sellers appeared in due order, it had the virtue of presenting a remarkable diversity of opinion. In this issue we have again asked a list of reviewers over the country, twenty-six of them, to behave as if they were Mr. Pulitzer's judges, though nobody asked them to keep an eye on the public welfare. Next week when the Pulitzer Prizes are announced it is our guess that you will be able to see here a more catholic choice of writers and books. For example, in the field of biography Douglas Southall Freeman's massive biography of the young George Washington won with eight votes; "Roosevelt and Hopkins," by Robert Sherwood, which is both an historical biography or biographical history, received six, and Dumas Malone's "Jefferson the Virginian" was third in the poll.

In history, Mr. Sherwood's book won hands down with thirteen votes; Eis-



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# Individual Nominations of the Nation's Book Reviewers

## *The Saturday Review's Annual Pulitzer Prize Poll*

| *Name and Medium* | *Fiction Vote* | *Biography Vote* | *History Vote* | *Poetry Vote* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FREDERIC BABCOCK,** *Chicago Tribune Magazine of Books* | "Guard of Honor," by James Gould Cozzens | "George Washington," by Douglas Southall Freeman | "Roosevelt and Hopkins," by Robert E. Sherwood | No nomination |
| **CLYDE BECK,** *Detroit News* | "The Young Lions," by Irwin Shaw | "Henry David Thoreau," by Joseph Wood Krutch | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **ALICE DIXON BOND,** *Boston Herald* | "Remembrance Rock," by Carl Sandburg* | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Crusade in Europe," by Dwight D. Eisenhower | "Actfive," by Archibald MacLeish |
| **VAN ALLEN BRADLEY,** *Chicago Daily News* | "Remembrance Rock" | "Lincoln's Herndon," by David Donald | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Stranger at Coney Island," by Kenneth Fearing |
| **EMMETT DEDMON,** *Chicago Sun-Times* | "Remembrance Rock" | "Jefferson the Virginian," by Dumas Malone | "The Age of the Great Depression," by Dixon Wecter | "Poems, 1922-1947," by Allen Tate |
| **AUGUST DERLETH,** *Madison [Wis.] Capital Times* | "Raintree County," by Ross Lockridge, Jr. | "Nathaniel Hawthorne: The American Years," by Robert Cantwell | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Terror and Decorum," by Peter Viereck |
| **MARY STAHLMAN DOUGLAS,** *Nashville Banner* | "Point of No Return," by John P. Marquand | "George Washington" | "Crusade in Europe" | No nomination |
| **PAUL FLOWERS,** *Memphis Commercial Appeal* | "Intruder in the Dust," by William Faulkner | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "The Great Rehearsal," by Carl Van Doren | "Collected Poems of John Peale Bishop" |
| **LEWIS GANNETT,** *New York Herald Tribune* | "The Naked and the Dead," by Norman Mailer* | "Jefferson the Virginian" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **VICTOR P. HASS,** *Omaha World-Herald* | "Guard of Honor" | "Henry David Thoreau" | "Literary History of the United States," edited by Spiller, et al. | No nomination |
| **MAX HERZBERG,** *Newark [N. J.] Evening & Sunday News* | "Raintree County" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Made in America," by John A. Kouvenhoven | "Poems, 1940-1947," by Theodore Spencer |
| **JOHN K. HUTCHENS,** *New York Herald Tribune* | "The Naked and the Dead" | "On Active Service," by Henry L. Stimson | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **FAITH R. JACKSON,** *Miami Herald* | "Remembrance Rock" | "George Washington" | "Origins of the American Revolution," by John C. Miller | "Terror and Decorum" |
| **JOSEPH HENRY JACKSON,** *San Francisco Chronicle* | "Guard of Honor" | "Jefferson the Virginian" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **STERLING NORTH,** *New York Post-Home News* | "The Naked and the Dead" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Crusade in Europe" | "Actfive" |
| **FRANK O'NEILL** *The Cleveland News* | "The Naked and the Dead" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Crusade in Europe" | No nomination |
| **JOHN D. PAULUS,** *The Pittsburgh Press* | "Remembrance Rock" | "George Washington" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **ORVILLE PRESCOTT,** *The New York Times* | "Guard of Honor" | "Jefferson the Virginian" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **W. G. ROGERS,** *Associated Press* | "Other Voices, Other Rooms," by Truman Capote | "George Washington" | "The Lincoln Papers," edited by David C. Mearns | "The Lost Son and Other Poems," by Theodore Roethke |
| **J. F. ROTHERMEL,** *Birmingham News-Age-Herald* | "Raintree County" | "Making of an Insurgent," by Fiorello La Guardia | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Cantos," by Ezra Pound |
| **JOHN K. SHERMAN** *Minneapolis Star & Tribune* | "The Young Lions" | "George Washington" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **THOMAS B. SHERMAN,** *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* | "The History of Nora Beckham," by Joseph Stanley Pennell | "George Washington" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | No nomination |
| **PAUL JORDAN SMITH,** *Los Angeles Times* | "Remembrance Rock" | "Jefferson the Virginian" | "The Memoirs of Cordell Hull" | No nomination |
| **ROBERT I. SNAJDR** *Cleveland Plain Dealer* | "Guard of Honor" | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Crusade in Europe" | No nomination |
| **LON TINKLE** *Dallas Morning News* | "Intruder in the Dust" | "Anson Jones," by Herbert Gambrell | "Roosevelt and Hopkins" | "Poems, 1922-1947," by by Allen Tate |
| **FREDERICK YEISER** *The Cincinnati Enquirer* | "Intruder in the Dust" | "George Washington" | "Literary History of the United States" | "The Double Axe," by Robinson Jeffers |

*Mrs. Bond and Mr. Gannett would select "Cry, the Beloved Country," by Alan Paton, if it is eligible, although written by a South African and having a South African setting.

**Mr. Tinkle has disqualified volumes that initiate a series, believing "such volumes should await their turn, perhaps, until the series is completed."

enhower's "Crusade in Europe" was a poor second with five, and the rest were also-rans. In fiction, Carl Sandburg's huge and somewhat difficult "Remembrance Rock" won with only one vote more than James Gould Cozzens's "Guard of Honor," which never had the honor of reaching or staying near the top of the best-seller lists. Our judges seemed to think very little of the year's production of books of poetry. Fourteen of them refused to nominate a single book and not one of them received more than two votes. There is something wrong here, though not with these reviewers, of which our readers will hear more in two or three weeks. It can be said, however, that Ezra Pound's "The Pisan Cantos," incomprehensible except to the *aficionado* of obscure verse, was one of the six books of poetry receiving a single vote.

—H. S.



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Three Syllables at Most

SIR: I have had the uneasy conviction of late that the goal of many modern writers seems to be that of turning out a work that only its creator can understand. In doing so they jump on a treadmill from which there is no escape for they must forever find even more ways of becoming more and more incomprehensible. All good art is basically simple and I wonder if it is not time for some of our writers to reexamine the dictionary and to regain acquaintance with words of one, two, or at the most, three syllables. A great many writers in the past have made admirable use of simple words and simple construction. In fact they created our greatest classics. I believe it is agreed that little that has been writen in this generation will be remembered by the next and I believe one reason for this sad state of affairs is that we do not strive to be writers but to be exhibitionists, much in the manner that some of our modern painters are exhibitionists pure and simple.

. . . . A young man contemplating a career as a writer would do well to devote at least three years to poking around our country listening to its heart beat. When at last he got ready to write I feel that he would know how because he would have learned simplicity and understanding and a great many other things besides.

EARLE DORECETTE.

Augusta, Me.

### "Bogus Best Sellers"

SIR: I find the letter from *The New York Times* [*SRL* Apr. 2] rather puerile and at the same time rather irritating. After making a number of unsupported assertions the writer draws three inferences which to my mind are quite unjustified. I will say again "that the figures are obtained from relatively few stores in relatively few cities," and "that the figures are compiled without reference to the most elementary rules of statistical sampling, weighting, and analysis."

I would be glad to leave this teapot tempest to any really good statistician.

PERCIVAL WHITE.

Market Research Company,
of America,
New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Percival White, a leading authority on market sampling, was the "well-known statistician" quoted in "Bogus Best Sellers* [SRL *Mar. 26]. The Market Research Company, of which he is president, has evolved a plan for compiling best-seller statistics which, they believe, is far superior to present methods.*

SIR: I am writing to suggest a method that might be acceptable in the best-seller controversy.

Let a central office be established to which each publisher would send a copy of each and all shipping tickets. The only extra cost would be paper and postage. By a suitable method or system of collating which I have in mind, a report could be issued weekly, showing the number of books delivered for sale, the geographic points or destination, all analyzed by titles. Publishers' shipments as a basis seems valid because the book-sellers are not —generally—going to order books that they can't sell, and if they do such stocks will be sold anyway, even at sacrifice prices. Validity would hold because we are interested in numerical sales.

It seems to me that this work could be done for about $30,000 to $35,000 per annum. The cost could be defrayed by the participating publishers on a pro-rata basis determined by the relative numbers of books processed for each publisher.

M. ROBERT DORN.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Two major difficulties will present themselves to Mr. Dorn should he attempt to put his plan into practice. First, he will have to cope with the lag between a large advance sale and the beginning of reorders. Sometimes this lasts for a month or more, and during that period no shipments will be made even though quantities of books are selling in retail outlets. Secondly, what will he do about publishers who ship books out on consignment irrespective of the actual orders from dealers?*

SIR: I have read Mr. Cass Canfield's letter [*SRL* Apr. 9]. He says in part, "The best-seller lists are undoubtedly of general interest to the public, but their importance should not be exaggerated as a basis for selecting a book for purchase." The point here is his "should not," a rather naive approach, it seems to me. It's much the same as saying we need no police because people "should not" injure each other.

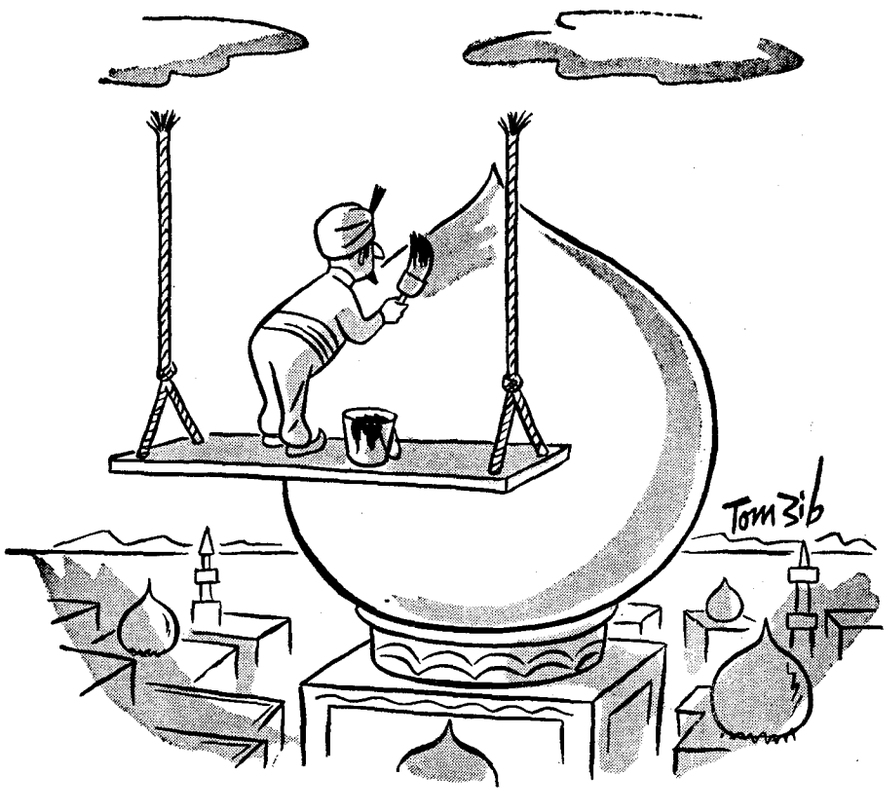
I made a long trip through the Middle West and West a year ago, and visited many book shops and book departments. In nearly every one either the *Times* or *Herald Tribune* list was posted in a prominent place, and I will suggest that this display was not based on their decorative value.

As a writer of books, I will take a nice calm middle course in this controversy. Should any book of mine be listed higher than it ought to be, I would be exceedingly happy, dancing a discreet *Times* or *Herald Tribune* jig in the privacy of my quarters. On the other hand, should a book of mine show up lower than the figures justified, I would be rather indignant, canceling subscriptions right and left. A draw.

DONALD HOUGH.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: May I congratulate you for the healthy airing of the best-seller controversy. Booksellers have always known that the lists were inaccurate, that they actually meant only in the broadest sense those books which were having sizable sales. There are numerous large stores as you know, such as ours, which never do report the best-sellers to any of the lists. The only way you could really establish, I think, an accurate list, and it might be an interesting experiment, would be to ask a dozen varied publishers, such as Harper, Knopf, Simon & Schuster, New Directions, Pantheon,



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McGraw-Hill, John Wiley, Harvard University, etc., for their twenty-five best retail outlets, and I think you would find that you would have a number of stores which were on all of these lists. If you received then an *accurate* list of the best sellers from these stores, you would, presumably, have an accurate best-seller list, and it might be an interesting experiment to try once.

JOHN JOSEPH HAGEDORN.

The Hagedorn Book Shop,
St. Louis, Mo.

SIR: Assuming that any best-seller list could be compiled with statistical and moral honesty, its value would be that of any other compilation of figures indicating a trend or a temporary phenomenon. It would by no means be a guide to good literature as you seem to imply that it could be. It should be rather obvious by now that, with rare and miraculous exceptions, the popular of necessity is trite, vulgar, and third rate. This applies to literature as well as anything else. Merely consider the literary and intellectual quality of our leading forms of literature: the historical novel, the crime and detective story, and the wonder of modern journalism the tabloid newspaper. . . . If book publishers are encountering economic difficulties, the responsibility does not lie solely with high production costs. Too many sincere lovers of books have been high-pressured into buying literary claptrap. At today's prices no one can afford to be rooked.

B. J. ARMATO.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Mr. Armato has read an unintended implication into our article "Bogus Best Sellers." We certainly do not suffer the delusion that best sellers and good literature are always synonymous.*

SIR: Now that you've got the subject out in the air, I'd like to know what kind of people buy the books that give the sales that make the report that the *Times* builds.

HAZEL BROWN.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

SIR: I hope you continue to set the pace in myth breaking. Myth breaking today is constructive because it will teach people to look for the truth.

EDWARD L. BERNAYS.

New York, N. Y.

### Jingle for Mrs. Kingsley

An optimist is one, I think,
Who works DC's with pen and ink;
Who scorns to take a single look
At any form of reference book,
And counts each puzzle full defeat
That's not within an hour complete.
The rest of us, whose rank is baser,
Will stick to pencil and eraser,
Will feel no qualms, nor even flinch,
In taking hints from old Bullfinch
When Mrs. Kingsley's learning
sticks us
With unfamiliar names like Phryxus.
In playing golf, one keeps a score
With par somewhere 'round seventy-four.
In double crostics, par's the same
If you approach them as a game;
Each minute as a point you count,
To which you add a like amount
For each mistake, plus ten, Gad zooks,
Each time you take a look in books.

A. S. LANGSDORF.

St. Louis, Mo.

### "Sensitivity as Censor"

SIR: The spirited discussion in *SRL* about Fagin and Shylock ["Sensitivity as Censor," *SRL* Feb. 26, *et sequens*] opened up quite a number of possibilities.

I think that working people could establish a detailed indictment of Shakespeare the snob, because in his plays, directed at the medieval box office of the titled and the rich, he, without exception, made his workers into despicable groundlings, buffoons, and malleable fickle members of a mob. However, I am not proposing a boycott of Shakespeare.

MARK STARR,
Educational Director,
ILGWU.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Here's to bigger and better censorship. Throw "Uncle Tom," "The Merchant of Venice," and "Oliver Twist" out of the library. Then do the same with the first thirty-nine books of the Bible. Let's have no more tales of incest, slaughter of women and children, no more of those prayers for revenge that David wrote as Psalms, no more recitals of the frauds perpetrated upon the Egyptians. I know: it's great literature, but what a reflection upon the people of whom it treats—and who wrote it. At least let's have it properly edited by a Board of Censorship, even though there's little left except the "begats." Highly sensitized minorities must be protected. Bosh!

LAMBERT FAIRCHILD,
Chairman, Committee for
Republican Integrity.

New York, N. Y.

### Better Late than Never

SIR: There is an unfortunate error in your article "Workout for Writers" [*SRL* Apr. 2]. The dates of the University of Kansas Writers' Conference were listed as July 8-19. Actually the conference is scheduled for June 8-21. It would be particularly unfortunate if prospective members appeared in Lawrence a month late, as at that time I expect to be located on a cool mountain in Northern Utah, writing—not talking about writing.

RAY B. WEST, JR.,
Director, Kansas
Writers' Conference.

Lawrence, Kan.

### On Fire

SIR: With my favorite sixty-nine cent briar clamped firmly between my teeth, I was carefully perusing the Mar. 19 issue of your "Promethean protestant" magazine, when I became so engrossed in the question raised by Martin Wolfson that only after laying the issue aside did I discover that a fallen ash had burned two holes in my best Montgomery Ward suit. What more can Mr. Wolfson wish?

ERNEST YORK.

Bryan, Tex.

SIR: Mr. Wolfson may be right in saying that many English teachers, as individuals, do not "catch on fire," but many more are caught with the deep significance of the times and its implications for the future. As a high-school English teacher who has caught on fire in many instances only to be met with apathy and misunderstanding, it is difficult in the face of such response to inculcate, except in the few, an analytical, observing nature.

We may lose our sights on occasion with a preoccupation with syntax or grammatical "gobbledygook," but many of us are acutely aware of the higher purpose of steering young minds to and through a maze of difficult ideas and trying to show them the guideposts of the times. They may catch the glint of an idea, a trend, a new concept, and become enthused only to see lack of understanding in the adult world in which they desire stable membership.

Many of us who have contacted some of the basic realities do not "chit-chat" idly over our coffee cups. If we can fire the minds of two per cent of our students and convince that number that the world is still a challenge to keen minds, regardless of the morbidity and pessimism of many of our writers, we can say we have accomplished much.

GRAHAM S. FREAR.

Amery, Wis.

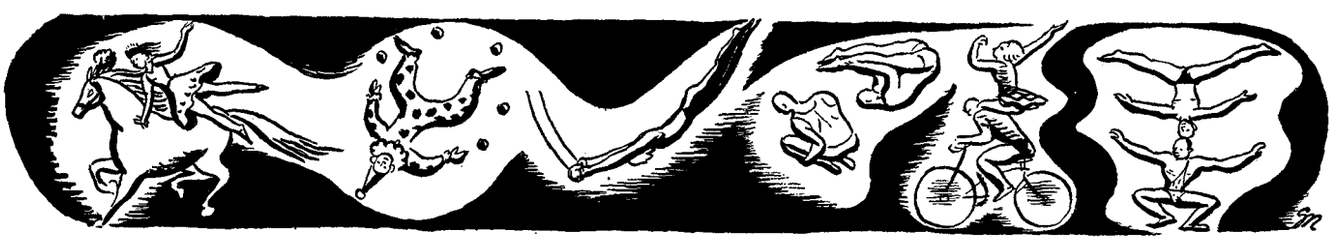
### A Not-So-Soft Answer

SIR: Lines to Mr. Ray F. Carter, his soft pencil and art gum [*SRL* Apr. 9]:

The deal is closed, all's said and done,
Our point is made, the battle won.
Now heaves a traitor into sight
Who'd havoc cry, re-ope the fight,—
A wolf within the D-C fold
For whom we'll hope the bell is tolled.
And "malcontents"—he'd call us that!
Have at you, Mr. Carter! Scat!

WIN ECKHARDT.

Clayton, Mo.





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## THE DANCE

(*Continued from page 21*)

work presenting the modernists' side of the case, often in their own words. Hers is the first book of its kind, and it is subject to all the virtues and failings of the trailbreaker. Enough material is present, though, to make it a handy reference for the backgrounds and accomplishments of the leading modern dancers. The "big three"—Graham, Humphrey, and Weidman—as well as Holm and Tamiris are competently dealt with. Their roots are explored, their contributions assessed, all in a lively (sometimes too lively and arch) style. Their predecessors, the Duncan, Wigman, and Denishawn schools, are evaluated, and the younger generation of modern dancers and choreographers, especially José Limon, get their share of attention. Some, however, are rather generously covered in relation to others who have contributed equally as much. Koner, Maracci, Marchowsky, and Litz, for instance, are mentioned only in passing, while Miriam Winslow is completely ignored. Organizations, individuals, and publications which have cooperated in spreading the gospel come in for a pat on the back. A number of excellent action photographs helpfully supplement the text.

As for the author's opinions, one can do no more than say that modern dance being the subjective, expressionistic thing it is, there are bound to be disagreements. The introduction contains some rolling generalities that try to define the subject but only flirt with it. Later on there is some reckless wrestling with the word "masterpiece," and some unconscious humor while dealing with the creations of Martha Graham, where Miss Lloyd gets somewhat confused trying to explain them. Also, the section on ballet and associated subjects should have been dropped. Little space was available for it, and the result is a helter-skelter assemblage of names.

*THE ROUND DANCE BOOK, by Lloyd Shaw. The Caxton Printers.* $5. *PARTNERS ALL—PLACES ALL! by Miriam H. Kirkell and Irma K. Schaffnit. Dutton.* $3.95. Lloyd Shaw's contribution to his chosen field is a 440-page labor of love that discusses methods of dancing the waltz, polka, mazurka, schottische, two-step, and a few circle dances, together with many varieties of each. He writes in a homey, uncomplicated style, and his explanations are clear. Dance teachers and recreations leaders will get the most from this book. A round dance, incidentally, is one which features a couple "in anything from ancient waltz to jitterbug." "Partners All—Places All!" contains forty-four square and folk dances, with simplified musical arrangements for piano juxtaposed to each. Here too the movements are painstakingly detailed; suggested recordings for each dance are an additional help.

*THE TEACHING OF FOLK DANCE. FOLK DANCES OF THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO. FOLK DANCES OF THE BRITISH ISLES. FOLK DANCES OF SCANDINAVIA. FOLK DANCES OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, all by Anne Schley Duggan, Jeanette Schlottmann, and Abbie Rutledge. A. S. Barnes.* $3 *each.* These five volumes make up the Folk Dance Library, which claims an ambitious set of aims ranging from the exploitation of pure motor activity to the development of international understanding. "The Teaching of Folk Dance" is a thorough, pedagogic piece of work, especially valuable for its instructions on the formation of folk-dance festivals. Its companions in the series present general cultural background along with precise, detailed information (diagrams and music included) showing how the dance steps fuse into a pattern. Attractive printing, as well as authoritative writing, are features of the collection.

*DANCES OF AUSTRIA, by Katharina Breuer. DANCES OF FINLAND, by Anni Collan and Yngvar Heikel. DANCES OF GREECE, by Domini Crosfield. DANCES OF PORTUGAL, by Lucile Armstrong. Chanticleer.* $1.25 *each.* Each of these short books has introductory matter concerning the geography, traditions, costumes, and music indigenous to the various locales. Basic steps and four specific dances are then briefly discussed, piano accompaniments furnished. The material is useful to those interested in the topic, and the specialist will have no trouble in working out the dance analyses proper. Bibliographies are appended. —ROSALYN KROKOVER.

# *Robert Herrick: "Delight in Disorder"*

Interpreted by George Cole and David West

A SWEET disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantoness:
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction:
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthralls the crimson stomacher:
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbons to flow confusedly:
A winning wave (deserving note)
In the tempestuous petticoat:
A careless shoestring, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:
Do more bewitch me, than when art
Is too precise in every part.



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# Personal History.

*Elsewhere in this issue, under the heading "Belles-Lettres," we review a group of books about the practice of literary criticism. In a sense, the three biographies discussed below are an extension of those comments. George Stewart Stokes's competent new biography of Agnes Repplier, the last mistress of the quiet essay, offers us an opportunity, as our reviewer remarks, "to measure our drift towards violence" in the worlds of literature and of affairs. Peter de Polnay, who knew Edward FitzGerald intimately, has helped illumine the career of the "Rubaiyat's" translator through an amiably discursive memoir, "Into an Old Room." For the thousands of lovers of "Little Women," Sandford Salyer's "Marmee," a biography of Louisa May Alcott's mother, the prototype of Mrs. March, will exert a powerful appeal.*

## *The Lot of Abba May Alcott*

*MARMEE: The Mother of Little Women. By Sandford Salyer. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.* 1949. 209 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ROSEMARY CARR BENÉT

THIS is a good biography of a much harassed woman. Although she had a gifted husband and a famous daughter, few women will envy the lot of Abba May Alcott. One feels sympathy, admiration, but never envy! It took endurance and character to get through her life at all, and only because she was endowed with common sense and steadfastness, did she manage to work things out for herself and for the rest of her family. It is satisfying to record that like a novel with a happy ending, her last years were the best, the least troubled.

As Abigail May she did not have too many problems. Agreeably and solidly related to Mays, Sewalls, and Quincys, she grew up in Boston, the youngest of Colonel May's seven children. It was her marriage to Bronson Alcott, the transcendental philosopher, that brought her both pain and pleasure, troubles and rewards. (No whirlwind lover he! It took him some time to make up his mind to wed and he speaks absentmindedly of "Miss May" the day after his marriage.) Certainly Bronson Alcott was one of the most trying and difficult of husbands, except possibly for Tolstoy, and fortunately for him, Abba May was much more patient and understanding with his storms of temperament than the countess. Bronson was a visionary, a brilliant idealist, but erratic and impractical to a degree. He had no sense of proportion as his experiment at Fruitlands and the consociate family proved. Through that and even more difficult moments, his wife defended him, kept her sense of humor and managed to make a warm home life for her girls. "Wife, children, and friends are less to him than the great ideas he is seeking to realize. How naturally man's sphere seems to be in the region of the head, and woman's in the heart and the affections," she says philosophically.

This is a good and entertaining biography. Sandford Salyer has admirable detachment in presenting Abba and Bronson, conveys the two strong personalities, and does not take sides. His text is simple and scholarly and all the details of life in Concord are here accurately. Just as Louisa Alcott in "Little Women" made Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy models for a whole generation of girls, Mrs. March, who was based entirely on Mrs. Alcott, became a legendary maternal figure. (Indeed "Marmee" and Mrs. Whistler are probably our best known symbols of American motherhood.) Mrs. March had fewer problems than her prototype; poverty and a husband away at the Civil War were as nothing compared to what Abba May had to worry her. Though many people have written of both Bronson and Louisa, this is the first full biography of Mrs. Alcott and in it she comes alive, vigorous and indomitable throughout all her seventy-seven years.

Peter de Polnay—"waited upon by two large Victorian gentlemen."

## *Suffolk Recluse*

*INTO AN OLD ROOM. By Peter de Polnay. New York: Creative Age Press.* 1949. 305 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by CARLOS BAKER

DURING Peter de Polnay's first night of residence at Boulge Hall, Suffolk, he was waited upon in a dream by two large Victorian gentlemen, wearing tweeds and heavy boots and breathing stertorously. These were the brothers John and Edward FitzGerald, like as peas, divergent as morning and afternoon.

One had lived an entirely orthodox life as proprietor of the hall—and become a mere name on a gravestone among the pollard oaks of Boulge. But the other, queer as quirk, was soon "signaling madly from underneath the shroud" for author De Polnay's attention. Edward's wigwags, together with a certain amount of labor among the FitzGerald papers at Trinity College, Cambridge, collaborated to produce this pleasantly discursive "memoir" of the man who wrapped up the "Rubaiyat" of Omar Khayyam and silently stole immortality.

"You mustn't do that," said one of FitzGerald's grandnieces when De Polnay mentioned his plans for a biography. An American professor, Alfred Terhune, had already secured the lady's permission to write a life of FitzGerald, and she knew that it would be a good book. Her expectation was realized when the Terhune biography appeared in 1947: a brief, thorough, readable, scholarly study. But the ghost of FitzGerald wigwagged even more vigorously than before, and De Polnay proceeded with his work.

Love's labors are not lost, despite the memoirist's splenetically wistful refusal to leave well enough alone. He pieces out his impressionistic and anecdotal story with accounts of his own year-and-a-half's retirement into an old room at Boulge Hall; and he is good at suggesting the shape and texture of the provincial environs, the sucking viscosity of Suffolk clay, and the smell of the German sea to the east, where FitzGerald used to sail his herring-lugger. He feels more free than he thinks Terhune felt to specu-

(*Continued on page* 32)



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# Seeing Things

## "FOR THE FAIREST"

ERIS was her name. Recently I and some of my critical confreres have had reason to curse her roundly. Put her down as the real cause of the Trojan War. Yes, and as the symbol of the agony reviewers know to this day when, come a season's end, they assemble to bestow their prizes for the year's "best" and must choose (as not long ago they had to) between two such admirable and dissimilar competitors in the field of musicals as "South Pacific"* and "Kiss Me, Kate."

"For the Fairest," Eris had written on the golden apple which she, the uninvited, had tossed among the guests at King Peleus's wedding feast. Naturally, every goddess present wanted that apple and thought she deserved it. When the choice had finally narrowed down to Aphrodite, Hera, and Pallas Athena, Zeus, you will remember, was called upon to serve as judge. Zeus, however, was no fool. He ducked the decision, advising the three contestants to hie themselves to Mount Ida, where young Prince Paris, a connoisseur of such matters, would make the award.

When the three goddesses appeared before that startled youth, he was not asked (though this is usually forgotten) to choose the fairest. He was asked to give the apple to the goddess whose bribe most appealed to him; in other words, to the goddess who offered him most. Hera promised to make him Lord of Europe and Asia; Athena that he would lead the Trojans to victory against the Greeks; Aphrodite that the most beautiful woman in all the world should be his. Being a man more ardent than ambitious, Paris handed Aphrodite the apple, even as before long Aphrodite handed him Helen with not unpublicized results.

At the recent meeting of the New York Drama Critics Circle at the Algonquin, the selection of the year's best American and foreign plays was easy. It involved no puckered brows, no lacerated consciences, no Teufelsdröckhian torments about the Everlasting No and Yea. Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" and the late Jean Giraudoux's "The Madwoman of Chaillot" were almost inevitable choices.

But when it came to having to decide between "South Pacific" and "Kiss Me, Kate" as the season's best musical, I must admit I found myself faced with a dilemma which perplexed me mightily. It was then that inwardly I cursed Eris and the discord she continues to provoke among those asked, in Paris's fashion, to turn apple-bestower. I happened to vote, along with five of my fellow-reviewers, for "Kiss Me, Kate." But I do know that I was neither surprised nor displeased to find that eighteen of the Circle's members had cast their ballots for "South Pacific." Both are so exceptional in their skill, their charm, their music, vitality, production, and performances that each, to my way of thinking, is entitled to a prize. My one regret (and this lasted only during the voting) is that the two of them could not have simplified matters by coming in different years.

"South Pacific" is a memorable contribution to this country's musicals. Its excellences are such that it must be bracketed with "Show Boat" and "Oklahoma!". It can claim almost everything that such a work needs to endear itself to a limitless public and yet win the respect of those who have a serious regard for this form of entertainment.

As everyone except Eskimos and Russians must know by now, it is derived from James A. Michener's "Tales of the South Pacific." That in itself is an auspicious beginning. Mr. Michener's collection of stories was one of the notable books to come out of the war. Its writing was muscular and sensitive. With people and places it dealt perceptively. It had power, sweep, and compassion. Moreover, without ever being sentimental, its pages were warmed with the hungers of romance.

Being wisemen of the theatre, Oscar Hammerstein 2nd and Joshua Logan have not attempted to scatter their fire when bringing Mr. Michener's tales to the stage. From his nineteen stories they have chosen two, and two only—the story of the French planter's courtship of the Navy nurse, and the love affair of the Marine lieutenant and the young Tonkinese girl. With the same ingenuity Mr. Logan showed when with Thomas Heggen he dramatized "Mister Roberts," he and Mr. Hammerstein have compressed and combined incidents, assigning, for example, what in the

—John Swope.

**Ezio Pinza and Mary Martin—"a romantic character . . . and a figure of enchantment."**

**SOUTH PACIFIC, a new musical play based on James A. Michener's "Tales of the South Pacific." Book by Oscar Hammerstein 2nd and Joshua Logan. Lyrics by Mr. Hammerstein. Music by Richard Rodgers. Directed by Mr. Logan. Settings by Jo Mielziner. Orchestrations by Robert Russell Bennett. Costumes by Motley. Produced by the Messrs. Rodgers and Hammerstein in association with Leland Hayward and Joshua Logan. With a cast including Mary Martin, Ezio Pinza, Myron McCormick, Juanita Hall, William Tabbert, Betta St. John, Martin Wolfson, Harvey Stephens, etc. At the Majestic. Opened April 7, 1949.*



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Rates, for a 10-day period including admission to all concerts and lectures, are as follows: Excellent accommodations in hotels and guest cottages on the American Plan (includes meals) from $150 to $250 per person. European Plan from $85 to $175. A wide variety of inexpensive European Plan accommodations in mountain cottages, motels, rooms in private homes and dormitories, from $55 to $75. First Series June 27 to July 7. Second series July 7 through July 16. For information, reservations address Goethe Bicentennial, Box S-4, Aspen, Colo.

printed volume was the ghastly but heroic fate of a remittance man to the Marine lieutenant. They intertwine these two romances, the one of which ends happily, the other sadly, playing them antiphonally against each other. Meanwhile, in a book almost sturdy enough to stand by itself as a drama without music, the authors touch so seriously upon the tragic stuffs of love and the no less tragic stuffs of racial discrimination that their libretto might bear a perilous resemblance to Jackson Heights's idea of "Madame Butterfly," were it not for their unfailing theatrical sagacity.

The proof of Mr. Hammerstein's and Mr. Logan's expertness is the way in which they manage to keep heavy materials light. If they supply pathos which is credible, they also provide humor which is enjoyable. They know how to vary their ingredients so that they emerge gay yet tender, compulsive but comic enough. They people their stage with a host of lesser characters, salty and earthy, war-tough and picturesque.

Mr. Logan once again demonstrates that special wizardry which is his as a director (this time of the musical numbers, too). He is a master at keep-

## *Pan and the Maiden*

By Leila Jones

IN LIGHT the garden stood,
Or gentled in grave shadow
Between the mountain wood
And the wild wayside meadow.
There flowers rose and set,
Small suns to a green sea:
Pansy and mignonette,
Lavender, peony.

It was shaped like the mark
Of a deer's hoof on lawn:
A creature come at dark
And as silently gone.
With the gate left ajar,
Now under the trees
A stranger comes to stare
In shaggy dungarees
And a thatch of black hair.
No more to blossoms grow.
Toadstool and Indian pipe
Like pallid lanterns show
Where the wild grape hangs ripe.

There is nothing to fear
Under Grandfather's bed,
For I looked, though I hear
On the back porch a tread,
And a step on the stair.
There was time to take warning
Of mischief—and more!
Too late now till the morning,
For a lock on the door!

*STAGE*

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RICHARD RODGERS & OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
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LELAND HAYWARD & JOSHUA LOGAN
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*In A New Musical Play*
South Pacific
*Music by* RICHARD RODGERS
*Lyrics by* OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
*Book by*
OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd & JOSHUA LOGAN
Adapted from JAMES A. MICHENER'S Pulitzer Prize Winning "TALES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC"
*Directed by* JOSHUA LOGAN
*Scenery & Lighting by* Jo Mielziner
*with* MYRON McCORMICK
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THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT
JEAN GIRAUDOUX'S Comedy
*Adapted by* MAURICE VALENCY
*with*
MARTITA HUNT · JOHN CARRADINE · ESTELLE WINWOOD · VLADIMIR SOKOLOFF
BELASCO 44th St. E. of B'way. Evgs. 8:40. Mats. Wed. & Sat.

HENRY FONDA
*in*
Mister Roberts
*A play by* THOMAS HEGGEN & JOSHUA LOGAN
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ing things moving; of creating the needed illusion; of being able to touch the emotions and yet tickle the funny bone. No one in our theatre is wiser in its ways or, for that matter, has a more unerring instinct for solving the knotty problems of casting.

It would be hard to imagine a better company than he has assembled for "South Pacific." Myron McCormick is perfect as the cocky sergeant whose undulant stomach boasts an expanse of tattooing which is as elaborate as a mural. Juanita Hall's Bloody Mary is sharply defined and finely sung. William Tabbert is attractive, winning, and capable as the Marine lieutenant. And Betta St. John's Tonkinese girl is magical in her beauty and grace.

As for Mary Martin and Ezio Pinza, neither of them could be better. Needless to say, Mr. Pinza's voice is of a kind and quality Broadway is seldom privileged to hear. What does need saying, however, is that Mr. Pinza acts as well as he sings. His Emile de Becque is a full-fledged romantic character, virile, charming, all-conquering. Is his hair iron-gray? What of it? The young can take lessons from him with the same certainty that the middle-aged can take hope because of him.

Ever since Miss Martin captivated the town by singing "My Heart Belongs to Daddy," it has been clear that, as surely as the elder Tell's arrow found its way to the fruit perched on his son's head, she was bound to become one of the top performers in our theatre. No one sitting before her in "South Pacific" can question her arrival at her goal. In spite of the cropped hair she now sports, she is not undone by her hair-do. She is cute without being coy; sweet but not saccharine; and rowdy without being vulgar. She moves as if Terpsichore had taught her, and she can play a straight scene with the same surety that she can put over a number. Dressed in an outsized sailor's suit or in Motley's best, she is a figure—and a personality—of radiance and enchantment.

BEING one of those musical illiterates who is overcome with a surge of pride when able to distinguish "Fair Harvard" from "Boola-Boola," I will not presume to have an opinion about Richard Rodgers's score. I can only confess these cottoned ears found his music beguiling. Though somewhat distressed by the dragged-in didacticism of such a plea for tolerance as "You've Got to Be Taught," I was so delighted with "Bali Ha'i," "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair," "Some Enchanted Evening," and "I'm in Love With a Wonderful Guy" that, for a few self-deceived moments on the way home, I was confident that even I could carry the tunes.

Why then, you may ask (as I asked myself at the meeting of the Critics Circle), when I admired "South Pacific" to such an extent did I cast my ballot for "Kiss Me, Kate"? For this simple, entirely personal reason. Though "Kiss Me, Kate" is a much less ambitious offering, I must admit that, all things considered, I think I had the better time at it. I liked its undiluted gaiety, its very absence of pretense, and the intricacies and innuendoes of Cole Porter's lyrics. The romantic musical drama, however skilful—and heaven knows "South Pacific" is as skilful as they come—is a form which, though prized by most theatregoers, is not a favorite of mine.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

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## PERSONAL HISTORY

(Continued from page 27)

late upon the psychological origins of FitzGerald's eccentricities. The looseness of his plan allows him to expatiate as whimsy invites. Out of the seemingly tangled skein of fact, fancy, and essential irrelevancy emerges a sampler-portrait of the artist as an old man.

For Old Fitz, as Thackeray called him, was confirmed in his crotchets by his twenty-fifth year, a settled being whose vegetarian diet was an earnest of his rootedness. To rest content, he needed little more than odd books, thick tramping-boots, and the promise of ale and cheese by the fire with a few friends. His marriage to Lucy Barton, daughter of a Quaker poetaster, was a mistake from which he recoiled as promptly as his dazed desperation would permit. But when his friend Cowell introduced him to the twelfth-century Persian quatrains of Omar, Old Fitz settled happily down to fosterfatherhood, finding in the work of adoption and adaptation a kind of "*triste plaisir*," and in the poem a "desperate sort of thing, unfortunately at the bottom of all thinking men's minds: but made music of."

The mystery of FitzGerald is still the peculiar grace with which he adopted Omar and adapted his poem to Victorian needs. De Polnay does no more to crack this mystery than any of Fitz's previous biographers. Nor is he able to account, except in terms of a *fin de siècle* undergrowth of religious agnosticism, for that phenomenon of belated best-sellerism which put copies of the "Rubaiyat" in nearly every bookcase from London to Los Angeles.

Readers may accept or regret, according to their receptivity to such

### LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Coleridge: "Christabel." 2. Herbert: "Virtue." 3. Swinburne: "Atalanta in Calydon." 4. Tennyson: "Locksley Hall." 5. Holmes: "The Old Man Dreams." 6. Browning: "Pippa Passes." 7. Seeger: "I Have a Rendezvous with Death." 8. Wordsworth: "The Excursion." 9. Byron: "Don Juan." 10. Moore: "The Last Rose of Summer." 11. Noyes: "The Barrel Organ." 12. Hood: "The Dream of Eugene Aram." 13. Carruth: "Each in His Own Tongue." 14. Milton: Paradise Lost." 15. Bryant: "To the Fringed Gentian." 16. Campbell: "Hohenlinden." 17. Cowper: "The Task." 18. Stevenson: "Bed in Summer." 19. Shakespeare: "As You Like It." 20. Shelley: "Ode to the West Wind."

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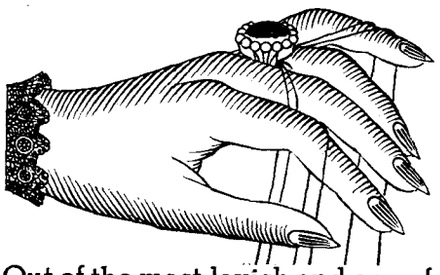

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notions, Mr. De Polnay's speculations on the sublimated homosexuality of the Suffolk recluse. He seeks support for his views in Fitz's dominating mother, the travesty of his marriage, and his loyal attachment to a succession of cronies like Tennyson, Thackeray, Browne, Cowell.

Mr. De Polnay does better with the grounds of Boulge Hall: the pollard oaks, the sporadic chimes of the stable clock, the cowslips, the nightingales, and the slow-flowing Deben—the quiet environs of the old room in which he first met Edward FitzGerald.

## *Informal Essayist*

*AGNES REPPLIER: LADY OF LETTERS. By George Stewart Stokes. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.* 1949. 274 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THERE appeared some years ago (was it in *The Saturday Review of Literature*?) a charming essay entitled "Death of a Little Old Lady." The author of it lamented the passing of the informal essay, that literary genre which, from Washington Irving to Agnes Repplier, reminded its readers that good manners and good literature are as much a part of life as earnestness and information. Of course the informal essay had its weaknesses. Often it had the quality of seeming to be a stunt, as when the author threw some trivial theme into the air and called upon readers to admire his dexterity in keeping it up for ten pages; and it was also, and of necessity, egoistic. Whether it was any more egoistic than contemporary confessional prose is doubtful, for its egoism was disciplined by culture.

We have developed no adequate substitute for the little old lady. Our columnists pontificate. The literary exploitation of personality grows daily crasser as the advertising boys pyramid "name" values. The feature articles which, in most national magazines, have driven belles-lettres into a corner, are earnest and grim as we suffer weekly a new crisis. Even *The New Yorker*, which alone among our periodicals retains lightness of touch, is overly fond of ironical situations revealing the brutal hand beneath the velvet glove. As for literary criticism, it has become so abstruse and technological in the academic quarterlies that that forgotten soul, the gentle reader, very sensibly refuses to read it. Accordingly, the titles of Miss Repplier's books—"Essays in Idleness," "The Fireside Sphinx," "Points of Friction" are some of them—stare

Agnes Repplier—"no adequate substitute for the little old lady."

at us across the years, pathetic ghosts from a world we hold to have been more stable than is ours.

To the quiet career and accomplished pen of this admirable spinster George Stewart Stokes devotes a competent and amiable biography. Her life lacks lurid incident. Schoolgirl mischief in a convent, trips to Europe, a passionate commitment to American intervention in World War I—these are the utmost in drama. There were domestic sacrifices. She lived in Philadelphia, Boston, New York; she lectured widely; she traveled; she turned out essays (toward the end, rather mechanically); she wrote a small group of biographies, principally of Catholic worthies, she lived in full possession of her wits into a ripe old age. She comes to us like an invention by Fanny Burney or Mrs. Gaskell. Mr. Stokes has done all that can be done with this quiet life, which leaves on the reader an impression of culture, of charm, of surety, of liveliness of mind and spirit, of an intelligent and enlightened Catholicism.

Given the contemporary passion in American writing for verbal violence, verbal intricacy, I suspect Miss Repplier's essays are now museum pieces. Most of them are good, none of them is quite memorable. They have every virtue except intensity, and intensity, by definition, the informal essay cannot give. But they represent, they spring from, a quality of cultural stability. Their author took literally the theory of our English departments that literature is a rod and a staff. She lived with books, and she was really in a tradition. But for her, tradition was neither bellicose nor paradoxical nor a surrogate for emotional confusion. Hers was the tradition of good sense.



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thousands of pounds. He is put in charge of his niece, Ann, who has had some medical training, and is promptly taken to Tolbrook House, once one of the minor glories of seventeenth-century domestic architecture, but now fallen into disrepair and pervaded by the odor of age and decay. His energetic niece puts him to bed in the room in which he lived as a child.

Suddenly the past comes back to him, and in this book he traces backward and forward the tangled story of his family's decline. The man who is approaching eighty lives in two worlds at once; in the eyes of Ann he sees his brilliant brother Edward's decline to ruin and death, and beyond him his own father and mother, and his grandfather. And mingled with the past is his own fight to keep his ailing heart beating, to stay alive for whatever grim flavor there is left in continuing to exist so that he may remember the past to the last bitter drop. This involves the grim but fascinating minutiae of an old invalid's days and the struggle with relatives who try to keep him from making a will by which one or the other might profit. Mr. Cary has thus written two novels in one. When the reader has become used to the sudden alternations of past and present, the story has a strange and compelling fascination; for the specter of death looms on every page, and one by one the once loved or hated figures are sent to their graves through the memory of a man who stands trembling on the brink of his own.

These shadows return vividly to life like the characters of a play, for Joyce Cary has above his other gifts as a novelist the ability to bring men and women and children to reality. Old Tom, the narrator, is a strange, crabbed man, but in his way a philosopher, and especially on the subject of old age. "Love is a delusion for the old," he writes, "for who can love an old man? The old are surrounded by treachery for no one tells them the truth. . . . An old man's loneliness is nobody's fault."

Through the long story there is reflected the tragedy of the fall from grace over the last seventy years of England's old country aristocracy; the graceful habits and luxurious lives, the old houses falling to ruins or becoming public establishments, the fallen wealth and power of nineteenth-century England. But it is a process that has always gone on, Mr. Cary believes. "British country gentlemen of the fourth century," he says, "were often more cultivated than ourselves. Their families had lived for two or three centuries in those beautiful manors, among an art or literature already ancient. When we see the marble steps worn hollow by the naked feet of a dozen generations, we feel so close to them that we suffer for them in their terror and destruction." At the very end old Tom is still alive; his niece, already aging, has returned to him. It was understood by both of them that it did not matter to anyone whether he died today or tomorrow. When she had put him to bed, he says to her, at the very end, "You look as if you had swallowed a safety pin. You take life too seriously."

## *Watery Farm*

*THE NORWAYMAN. By Joseph O'Connor. New York: The Macmillan Co.* 1949. 352 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by RUTH MOORE

THE island known as Shark looked more like a whale, headed away from the Irish coast into the sea. Its back was humped, its blunt nose made a white bow-wave of breakers. Often the smoke from Mike Mack's chimney flew back in a vague plume, as if the whale were blowing.

It was "the loneliest gobbet of land in the West." Manastir, the village ashore, was an hour's hard rowing away. Black Head to the north and the Fang to the south stretched out from the mainland to make a bay in the mouth of which Shark Island sat alone. Its stark promontory, facing southwest, was the first land to split the salt water for ten thousand miles.

Three generations of Macks had lived in the single house on the island which was handed down now to young Mike Mack. The waters around were his farm, Mike told his bride, Maire, the day he brought her home. He knew all the marks for the sandy bottom where the plaice lived, for the mackerel grounds, for the submerged ledges, the way a farmer ashore might know his borheens. And Maire, whose father did have a farm on the mainland, looked at the miles of vacant water, wondering how a man might mark the sea.

For a while the Macks lived alone —so alone that Maire wouldn't mind taking off wet clothes outdoors to dry them, until suddenly she discovered that the cow was looking at her. Then old Joany came over from the land to be on hand in case there should be a lying-in to attend to. Mike needed some help with the fishing and a couple of men had to be boarded. Father John, the priest at Monastir, sent over a young orphan girl for Maire to look after—that Mai Hogan, who was so beautiful he didn't dare let her loose among the young men of the parish. And drifting out of nowhere in a smashed ship's boat, appeared the Norwayman, Knut Ollsen, the big, mysterious man who truly tried to leave a mark upon the island and its sea.

The Norwayman, in spite of his prominence in the title, is not the most memorable character in this memorable book. His dramatic arrival and departure are episodic pegs on which the chronicles of the Macks and Shark Island are loosely hung. He is a kind of whipping-boy for modern ways and customs; for Knut was a modern man, a trained mechanic and builder, full of a fever to improve, a disgust at the idleness of any useful thing. His monument at Shark Island might be a splendid new concrete water tank on the hill, with pipes ending in a tap beside Maire's kitchen door. But he was a bird of passage only. For long periods throughout the book he is out of everybody's mind, including the reader's, while the important thing, daily life, goes on unaltered. His flight through the story seems to say that tools of change make scrawls perceptible but slight upon the ancient rock.

Professor O'Connor's first interest in this novel lies with the people of coastal Eire, whom he reports with first-hand knowledge and understanding. He was reared in Ireland, and for years has traveled Eire as inspector of schools, recording in Gaelic his country's folkways, tales, and customs.

The true value of his book is in its authentic and poetic chronicling of a people and their lives, which sounds through "The Norwayman" with the ring of honest coin. Somewhere in a cottage between Shannon and Fastnet must actually have taken place the mass for Tim Mack—he that died in America and was prayed to his rest before daylight in his father's house in Ireland. And from somewhere thereabout, surely old Aunty Biddy did set out for the New World, tak-

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ing along, lest she be hungry, a barrel of spuds, a barrel of salty ling, a piggin of corned butter, and a dozen oatmeal griddle cakes.

The story of Maire and Mike and their neighbors might have opened as simply as an old chronicle: "A man and his wife once lived alone on an island in the sea"; and in some ways, one wishes it had, because Professor O'Connor at times produces a pedantic turn of phrase which mars the poetry of his tale. But perhaps it is carping to say so, God prosper him. Maybe the good words would have sounded more sweetly in the Gaelic.

*Ruth Moore is author of "Spoonhandle" and "The Fire Balloon," novels that deal with life on the coast of Maine.*

## *Hopeless Pilgrim*

*SOUTHBOUND. By Barbara Anderson. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co., Inc.* 1949. 339 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by
CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN

BARBARA ANDERSON has made one more contribution toward the cause of racial tolerance. Her plea is all the more pointed for being utterly calm, utterly proud, and instinctively dignified. Stripped of physical violence, the torture she depicts has a lethal subtlety sometimes more venomous than the lash.

This is the case history of Amanda Crane. Born in Alabama of a Negro mother and a white aristocratic father, the child is brought up by her grandmother, Laura, and her great-grandmother, withered Persy. Ambition for the light-skinned, musically talented, attractive little girl consumes Laura. She is ready to pose as her nurse when liberal Miss Carter opens her Ohio home to Amanda, promising golden opportunity and riches. This dream fades as the lady bountiful is stricken and her incredibly harsh brother drives out the blacks. In an Iowa town the struggle for equal education, for proper piano lessons, and for the most meager financial security wears out Laura and finishes poor homesick Persy. Amanda buries one after another on the remote Midwestern hills. Alone, mature, and still determined as an artist, Amanda with her small inheritance seeks Paris. There she finds stimulating instruction, hoped-for acceptance, and a mirage of love. But, at war's outbreak, it is the going-home train; it is her native heath; it is her own people after all that bring her lasting comfort.

There is much to remember in the straightforward telling of this story. The massive drive of Laura, selfless, sacrificing, overwhelmingly loving, surely transcends color. Blinded by her hope, she proceeds in vain, a comprehensible symbol of misguided sincerity. As opposed to her, Persy remains staunchly black, clinging to her race, lulled by ancient songs and contented subservience. She too makes for heartbreak. Then there is the always unbearable cruelty of children, the sense of the misfit, and the final chic Parisian salon exploitation of the tawny-skinned to mark the hopelessness of Amanda's pilgrimage.

Actually the cards are stacked against her at the outset. To pose as a Cuban, a foreigner, an exotic mulatto, must palpably fail to satisfy either an artist or a Negress. The time for subterfuge is passed. The experiment of concealment is false. The wheel has gone full cycle. Where the offense is greatest, there, Mrs. Anderson is convinced, the colored people must make a stand.

With sensitivity, observation, and embracing understanding, "Southbound" serves the cause of man's humanity, and serves it well.

## *Anne Boleyn*

### *The Tower*

By Katharine Adams

AT SUNSET hour it was her mood to glide
Within her golden barge from the low water gate,
Her boatmen chanting, ladies at her side—
For a brief while she put away her fate.

Until one clouded eve without a star,
Beyond the boundary of their usual hour
She saw—as they had drifted on too far—
The stark black terror of the Tower.



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## READING BEFORE WRITING

(*Continued from page 8*)

Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind," although after actually reading the latter he admitted that it was a corking story. Especially delightful is the picture of Roberts and Tarkington trying to comprehend why so much fuss was being made over William Faulkner. They took a very dim view of him, but Roberts saved most of his spleen for anyone who presumed to write an historical novel.

Like any self-respecting author, he struggled with his editors:

> *March* 8, 1931: Received *The Saturday Evening Post* containing the first installment of "Lively Lady," and perspired all day over the manner in which it had been hacked to hell.

Writers are advised to read this book, for in it they will meet a man who worked harder than they and who accomplished more.

ANOTHER view of writing is provided by the eminent New York literary agent Paul R. Reynolds in "The Writing Trade." Reynolds speaks of writing in the healthy manner one would speak of bricklaying: it's a way of making a living. He analyzes book publication, magazines, pulps, the movies, radio, and Broadway. He tells what the rules are, what the rewards are, what pitfalls to avoid, and how to make a killing in the industry. The concluding chapters deal with agents and with the organization of a successful career:

> The person who writes a novel, then some short stories, then a play, then does a stint in Hollywood, and then perhaps a mystery serial is likely to find himself at the age of fifty not much farther ahead than when he started. The author who can discover his forte, concentrate on it so as to be typed, is the one headed for the big time.

That takes care of Thornton Wilder and Robert E. Sherwood.

In the course of his book, Reynolds answers hundreds of questions frequently asked by beginning writers: What is the standard royalty? (Ten per cent; up to fifteen per cent after a success.) Who should choose the title of a book? (The publisher.) Do first-class publishers ever ask an author to share expenses? (No.) Are there any publishers who cannot be trusted? (Only a few.) If I send a story to a big magazine, will it be read? (Yes. Invariably.) How much do magazine editors earn? ($20-40,000.) Does *The Reader's Digest* buy originals, give them to magazines, then digest them? (Yes.) May an author submit the same story simultaneously to two magazines? (Ethically wrong to do so.) What do magazines pay for serials? ($10-50,000.) What do pulps pay? (1-3¢ a word.) Can a writer make a decent living from the pulps? (Six hundred do.) Do good writers ever rise from the pulps? (Often. Shellabarger, Richter.) What is an average weekly wage for a Hollywood writer? ($750.) Should a $200-a-week Hollywood writer try to be chummy with a $2,000-a-weeker? (Heavens, no!) Why is Hollywood so disgusting? (Too many people with no culture and much ego.) How many successful soap-opera writers are there? (About fifty.) What do radio gag writers earn? (Average $600 weekly.) Is the radio release clause fair to writers? (No. It is outrageous.) Should I nevertheless sign it? (Yes, if you want to eat.) Do some radio executives steal ideas from writers without payment? (Yes.) What is the toughest writing field to break into? (Broadway.) What percentage of 1947-48 shows made their authors almost no income? (Fifty per cent.) What does the author of a smash hit make? (About $100,000.) Are so-called creative writing courses much good? (Not much.) Is there any good playwriting course? (One. Yale's.) What percentage of *Satevepost* fiction is acquired from agents? (Ninety per cent.) What is the agent's fee? (Ten per cent of all cash received.) Do agents who advertise for clients sell many stories? (Almost none.) Can an agent sell a bad story which the author couldn't sell? (No.) Can agents be trusted? (Most of them.) Does a novelist need a Hollywood agent? (Not if he has a good New York agent.) What short-story writer has never received a rejection slip? (Margaret Ayer Barnes.) Are income-tax laws fair to authors? (No. Extremely unfair.) Should an author join The Authors' League of America? (Mr. Reynolds says yes.)

A prominent reviewer once told me that he had only one infallible test of a good book: was he constrained to read passages aloud to his wife? By that criterion Mildred I. Reid's "Writers: Learn to Earn" is one of the best books ever written about the esoteric craft. Miss Reid is a teacher of writers and has to her credit five books of detailed instructions. To her, writing is a delightfully uncomplex means of making a lot of dough. All you have to do is follow the rules: "Since there is only one


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—*Raleigh, N. C., News and Observer*

Walter Pritchard Eaton, Percy Mackay, Holbrook Jackson and Marston Morse are among the thirty-seven contributors to this fascinating literary portrait of Archibald Henderson—gifted critic, author and philosopher.

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. . . genius in a carload of authors, unless you are positive that you are another Thomas Wolfe you'd be pretty wise to stick pretty close to the usual formula if you wish to sell to the slicks." She provides the formula, too, Rule 6 of which is my favorite: "Put your protagonist in a pool of trouble; each time he attempts to climb out, push him in again for fifteen pages or so and finally let him triumphantly emerge."

Miss Reid reduces everything to rawest essentials. Any editor of a slick magazine (her term) who reads her analysis of what he is looking for will probably commit suicide. This would depress Miss Reid, who cautions against morbid or off-trail deviations from formula: "Once you begin to sell you will lose all resentment toward formula, at least until the serpent named Significance rears his taunting head. Then you may decide to write a novel, where you at last can write anything you please from frustration stories to killing off as many darling little characters as you choose."

Miss Reid provides her own ideal opening for a short story: " 'So!' Jack Smith banged the receiver down on the hook and swung around in his swivel chair. If he took the widow Jones out for dinner tonight, Sue would break their engagement. And if he did not take the widow out, his boss would fire him." As Miss Reid points out, "There, in only forty-six words, is a situation which would bother any man. . . . The situation is pregnant with action."

In this hilarious book the aspiring writer can find all sorts of tabulated suggestions. One I liked was the following:

> EYES. Mentioning the color of eyes helps greatly in pictorialization. Smoky gray eyes, eyes as blue as the skies, sea-green eyes, luminous gray-green eyes, slanty green eyes, eyes like brown velvet, gold-flecked, snapping black eyes, warm brown eyes.

One gets a depressing picture of American writing from reading these books. Writing becomes a racket. The big money lies just ahead. Work hard, and you don't need anything else. Stick to the formula and you can have an agent and a winter home in Arizona. Get typed and stay typed; you'll live to be rich and famous.

Fortunately, there is more to writing than that. No one, by wanting hard enough, ever wrote an "Oliver Wiswell." There is a world of writing inhabited by Flaubert, Willa Cather, Turgenev, Hemingway, and Samuel Butler into which one cannot muscle his way. Entrance to that world comes through dedication, brains, and hard work. There are no easy shortcuts, as Kenneth Roberts noted on March 25, 1931: "Struggled on in Chapter 12—a tough one. They're *all* tough."

*James A. Michener's "Tales of the South Pacific," winner of the* 1948 *Pulitzer Prize for fiction provides the basis for the new Broadway musical hit "South Pacific." Mr. Michener's second novel, "The Fires of Spring," was recently published by Random House.*


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# The Criminal Record

## *The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction*

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|---|---|---|---|
| LADY KILLER<br>*George Harmon Coxe*<br>(Knopf: $2.50) | Cable from actress gal friend brings Kent Murdock to dock where new liner disgorges some passengers who spell trouble and death. | Gem smuggling and double murder incisively portrayed against Boston background — with plot, dialogue, and characters stepping high, wide, and handsome. | No complaints |
| SOME LIKE 'EM SHOT<br>*Fred Malina*<br>(Mill-Morrow: $2.50) | N. Y. lawyer, in Miami to help clear Negro of slaying shady politico, tangles with various gaudy members of Florida sassiety. | Plenty of lush local color, ample action, drinking, and canoodling. Sleuth is not too convincing and race angle ineptly handled. | Fair |
| HE'S LATE THIS MORNING<br>*Christopher Hale*<br>(Crime Club: $2.25) | "Heart condition" that kills wealthy sexagenarian in Florida villa turns into conium poisoning—presenting vacationing detective with fine case of family hatreds. | Lt. Bill French follows "typical murderer" through two killings, and clinches case by smart deducing—with clan bickering at his heels. | Satisfactory |


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# The Film Forum

## *FILMS IN FRENCH*

*The Saturday Review's* **Weekly Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.**

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The films reviewed below are without explanatory subtitles. Apart from their intrinsic interest, they are likely to be of value in French language and literature classes. Many French teachers are also using French feature films, either with or without subtitles, as an aid to conversation.*

### LA ROSE ET LE RESEDA

**Produced in France by André Michel after a poem by Aragon, spoken by Jean-Louis Barrault. Music by Jacques Ibert. Available from A. F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y. (12 mins.)**

The combination of some remarkable talents has produced on the whole a remarkable film. The whole bagful of conventional techniques has been thrown out of the window. This is a film poem set to a spoken poem, and it is chiefly as a visual poem that it must be judged. The film starts with a solemn announcement of its theme. Ibert's music borrows from a Bach chorale, intoned over images of a little French village, its church, its tavern, its farmhouses all seemingly deserted. Then the square, tree-shaded and peaceful. Here the villagers are gathered, sitting mute and motionless on benches, facing their captors. The Nazi soldiers march up and down in their jackboots with a ringing precision. The people stare.

The soldiers become a wooden image of tyranny. The camera rushes up to an eyeless figure, dumbly grasping his rifle. The scene dissolves. The countryside is aflame behind the soldier. Peace descends. Across a rocky landscape rides a solitary figure on horseback. Looking down, he sees two men lying on the olive-clad slopes, two comrades killed in action. As he watches, they come to life and rise from the ground. Silently he rides away.

Here Aragon's poem begins. Its theme is the identity of sacrifice between the two men, *celui qui croyait au ciel, celui qui n'y croyait pas.* Believer and unbeliever share the same devotion to France, run the same risk of death, stand shoulder to shoulder. Barrault's nervous high-pitched voice carries the poem headlong forward to its climax, an evocation of pigeons wheeling out together into space, and of *la rose et le reseda,* the rose and the mignonette.

The visual imagery is on the whole spontaneous and effective, carrying the eye and the mind along with a real poetic impulse. The political imagery is less fortunate. It is not very pleasant to see Aragon, who may be supposed to hold God and the Republic in no very high esteem, extending his hand to the Church, and drawing in the sand the figure of Marianne. Politics certainly makes strange bedfellows.

### PROFIL DE LA FRANCE

**Produced by Abel Gance and Jean Tedesco. Available from French Films and Folklore, Box 2A, 431 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y. (23 mins.)**

This and the remaining two films on our list may be obtained with a line-by-line transcript of the narrative in French, keyed to a list of the less commonly used words.

"Profil de la France," a film of the old master Abel Gance, who is remembered best for his silent "Napoleon," is a study in French coastal geography. Opening on the rocky shores of Normandy, the camera moves down to the estuary of the Seine, and thence to St. Malo. After this it takes a leap to the sand dunes of Gascony in the far South, and works its way back northwards into Brittany.

But this is no conventional travel film. Rather it is a mosaic of images of France—the medieval churches, the traveling carnivals and native costumes—narrated in a style which would seem ornate and precious in English but which suits the French idiom excellently.

The voice is clearly recorded and the commentary is delivered moderately slowly, so that the film should be of use in intermediate grades for language teaching. While the camera work is excellent, the technical quality of the picture image is not altogether up to modern standards.

### LE MOULIN ENCHANTÉ

**Produced by La France en Marche. Available from French Films and Folklore, Box 2A, 431 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y. (10 mins.)**

This is a brief biographical sketch of Alphonse Daudet, centered around his famous windmill, but radiating out to include his life in Arles and short summaries of his most famous books. The magnificent landscapes of Provence are finely photographed, and as much information is crowded in as could be expected in a ten-minute film.

The commentary is delivered rather more rapidly than in "Profil de la France," but the technical quality of sound and picture is better.

### AUTOUR D'UN CLOCHER

**Produced by La France en Marche. Available from French Films and Folklore, Box 2A, 431 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y. (10 mins.)**

The life of a village, grouped round its belfry. The film follows the familiar pattern of a day's work, starting with the baker who gets up when it is almost dark, and following in their turn the blacksmith, the saddlemaker, the mailmen, and the children going their way to school. All very charmingly photogtraphed.

—RAYMOND SPOTTISWOODE.

For information about the purchase or rental of any films, please write to Film Department, The Saturday Review, 25 West 45th St., New York 19, N. Y.


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# the Phoenix Nest

## BURNING JUNIPER

IN March or April, while bits of ice still
Lie hidden in the rough boughs—that's the time
For burning juniper. The smoke's not like
Any other; it's densely white as steam,
And pours out as if you'd pulled to pieces
A bale of cotton, and goes roaring up
In pungent-smelling billows. You recall
The old phoenix-legend? I always think
It wouldn't seem surprising if a bird
Of gleaming gold rose upward suddenly
Through that fragrant cloud. It's not easy, though,
To circumvent junipers. You may think
That you've got them under, once and for all,
But they're only biding their time, and long
After you're gone, they'll bedevil your son,
Most likely—running in those bronze-green waves
Over hummock and hollow, and lacing
Their prickly fingers together to hide
The oldest path, and by some secret cunning
Getting over, under, or through stone walls
To spread across your neighbor's lot as well.
They're a common nuisance, of course, but still,
When they're burning, they go surging up with
A tremendous smoke and a splendid sound!

—DOLORES CAIRNS.

* * *

The Pasadena Players in Pasadena, California, have been presenting Percy Mackaye's tetralogy, "The Mystery of Hamlet, King of Denmark," a sequence of four plays in prologue to the "Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," by William Shakespeare. The dates were April 14 to May 1, 1949. "It is not strange," says the playbill, "that the son of Steele Mackaye, genius of the theatre, and one of the world's greatest Hamlets, should have written these four plays, which might almost be the lost, unwritten dramas of Shakespeare himself." Percy Mackaye received the 1948 Fellowship Award of the Academy of American Poets, and has had a distinguished career as poet and dramatist. I have been very much impressed by reading the tetralogy. Later I shall have something to say concerning the publication of this monumental work. It seems to me a landmark in the American poetic drama.

* * *

## IMPROVEMENT

"You will find the resort much lovelier now that the abandoned old hotel is gone."

Five minutes' walk along the sand
From the clean, modern inn it stood,
Tattered palmettos at each hand.
Sagging porches of once-white wood
Gave it the faintly rakish air
Of an old actress, over-dressed,
Disheveled Spanish moss for hair.
Shutters had slipped and flame-vine pressed
Against the windows, clutching the sill;
Green lizards skittered up the wall,
Yet something of grace and grandeur still
Held sway in the great mirrored hall
Where piles of ballroom chairs stood stacked,
Velvet on gilt, and the bare room,
Repeated in glass, now tarnish-blacked,
Shone with a dim, frost-crystal bloom.

Some festive spirit hovered there
And made disintegration gay:
Was it the past still in the air?
Or was it that un-mourned decay—
As natural as a rotting tree—
Draws new life to its crumbling self?
Life tremulous as the mice—now free
To frisk across the pantry shelf,
Life warm as dove-eggs newly laid
In a nest right over the front door?
All that torn down! Improvements made
Which winter guests will value more:
Landscaping planned against the blue
Background of bay; trees far apart:
There is nothing now to spoil the view,
And nothing left to warm the heart.

—EVELYN AMES.

* * *

In re the Jane Austen party suggested by Gladys Bollman, I have had several suggestions. The first is from Edith Gilmore at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio:

> No one could have any serious doubts about the success of the dinner party at Donwell. Emma's household was a model of elegance and harmony. The gentlemen did not linger long over their wine that night because George Knightly could not bear to be long separated from his wife. The ladies had passed their time meanwhile in admiring the young Knightlys, who were brought in for inspection, but we must not be surprised if Catherine Tilney and Anne Wentworth had some private reservations in favor of their own children, for it is a "simple proposition" that each baby is "the finest child in the world."
>
> When the gentlemen appeared the evening's entertainment consisted principally of singing and playing, for all the ladies except poor Catherine were musical. We do not know, that is, about Mrs. Admiral Croft's abilities in this line, but I suspect that like Mrs. Weston she was "capital in her country dances" and always ready to play an "irresistible waltz." Dancing ended the evening in a manner much to Catherine's satisfaction for her spirits had been lowered by an attempt to appreciate what seemed an interminable performance on the harp by Miss Crawford. Henry assured her on the way home, however, that with persistence she might come to like music almost as well as she did

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 787)

KARL LEHMANN:
*THOMAS JEFFERSON*
(*American Humanist*)

* In the world's dark days of the opening of his University Jefferson wrote: "Even should the cloud of . . . despotism again obscure the science and liberties of Europe, this country remains to preserve and restore light and liberty to them."

*Opening phrase condensed, but thought not changed, for reasons of space.



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Mrs. Radcliffe's novels and Catherine was ready as always to believe him.

"A pleasant party, sir," said Eliza Bennet to her father.

"Remarkably so," answered Mr. Bennet. "I have heard less nonsense tonight than I have come to expect from any assemblage of my fellow beings. But that may be ascribed to the fact that the music limited all opportunities for conversation."

"Mr. Collins himself," continued Elizabeth, "could hardly have offered us a more agreeable evening."

"Except, you know, that through Mr. Collins we might have been invited to Rosings. Depend upon it, Lady Catherine de Bourgh would have asked us both to Rosings."

But Lady Catherine's party at Rosings that night was an oddly assorted group and at least four of the invitations must have been issued under some misapprehension. She could not have been well informed, for instance, about the Elton's income, for it is well known that Mrs. Elton (Miss Hawkins that was) brought her husband only just so many thousands of pounds "as will always be called ten." Next to Lady Catherine sat Sir Walter Elliot, then Mrs. Bennet, General Tilney, Miss Elliot, Mr. John Thorpe, Mrs. John Dashwood, Mr. Elton. And it may be conjectured that not even the ill-starred party to Box Hill called forth such a variety of unhappy sensations in the bosoms of its participants.

The other is from Sarah F. Morse, of New York, who writes as follow:

> Emma should be persuaded to invite Margaret Dashwood and William Price to her dinner party. They were engaging young people who would not embarrass their hosts, and they should really be brought forward by someone like Emma. Goodness knows what kind of girl William meets when he visits Fanny and Edmund, and Margaret probably won't fare much better. Eliza and her father could be left out, if necessary. They could scarcely accept the invitation anyway, however much they'd like to.

* * *

### STUFFED CAT

Hungriest of cats, my feline now
Has stuffed himself from stern to prow,
So that his neatly tailored hide's
Stretched taut around his fat insides.
Yet he is not content to dream
Of all the fish and bottle cream
He's just consumed. In search of more
He sniffs each kitchen cupboard door.
Still I'll not think his boundless need
Of food derives from any greed,
But deem his corpulent condition
A hardship suffered for ambition.
Such stuffing surely must affirm he
Means to master taxidermy!

—GEORGIE STARBUCK GALBRAITH.

* * *

—WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.


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(*Continued on page 40*)



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(Continued from page 39)

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## PERSONALS

WANTED: Summer sublet or lease furnished or unfurnished 1½ room apartment. Midtown. Maximum rental: $65. Box 355-H.

CAN YOU WRITE articles of 400 to 1000 words on any philosophical, political or humorous subject? Can use part time assistant with ability. Box 301-H.

YOUNG, CULTURED LADY, educated Germany, England and convent Italy, willing worker, seeks position in friendly home with nice atmosphere near or in N.Y.C. Has two beautifully mannered school-age children. Box 304-H.

*HOW CAN YOU make this a better world politically,* socially, etc? Write: Box 305-H.

COLLEGE SOPHOMORE would type, drive, break rocks for tuition expenses. Anyplace. Box 306-H.

*SINCERE, PERSONABLE, young male would enjoy* hearing from charming, modest girl. Box 307-H.

AMERICANO-SIMPATICO, discerning, appreciative, traveled, slightly sybaritic, would avoid disillusion. Box 308-H.

TWO COLLEGE GIRLS desire summer employment within Tanglewood vicinity. References exchanged. Box 309-H.

## PERSONALS

THE FOOTNOTE, newest literary monthly, featured Balzac in March; Keats, Byron in April; Tolstoi to be in May issue. Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe" being reprinted serially, The Footnote is sold by subscription only. $3. year. P.O. Box 71, Richmond, Va.

*NYC apartment for summer required by three tidy* college seniors (female) studying and working in Manhattan. Box 282-H.

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FEMALE AMPUTEES' correspondence invited by young, personable male. Box 288-H.

COLLEGE FRESHMAN, interested in physics, astronomy, everything, wants interesting, different job for summer. Box 289-H.

ADAPTABLE HOME ECONOMICS senior is available June 1 for summer employment. Box 290-H.

WALLACEITE teacher, stenographer, interested science, folk dancing, children, male correspondence. Box 291-H.

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COLUMBIA GRADUATE STUDENT (poet) seeks any permanent work anywhere September. Box 293-H.

GOING TO AUSTRIAN FESTIVALS? June-August. Austrian descent girl, secretary, speaks German, acts, etc. will work exchange for trip. Box 294-H.

CONNECTICUT COTTAGE: Two bedrooms; electricity; hot water; furnished except linen; near village and station. $500. season. Box 295-H.

ATTENTION! Weekenders! Own fireplace! Tray service, water-front, swimming. N.Y.C., Bayside 9-1162.

PSYCHOLOGIST, fond of the subtle, the simple, but especially the sensitive, invites feminine correspondence. Box 297-H.

IDEALISTIC, REFINED, YOUNG MAN with cultural and scientific interests, would appreciate correspondence with intelligent young lady with similar interests and sensitive temperament. Box 298-H.

VACATION RENTAL. Large attractive furnished cottage, modern conveniences and kitchen equipment, one of 7 on exclusive private 300 acre premises on shore of Lake Champlain, Vermont. Ideal for children and adults. Informal. $1000 for the season or $100 weekly. Box 299-H.

FURNISHED BUNGALOW on our farm, fireplace, screened porch, brook. $300 season. E. Jacobs, Highland, N.Y.

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## PERSONALS

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YOUNG WOMAN, entering European university, wishes work for passage. Experienced child, baby care. Fluent French, typing. Excellent references. Box 266-H.

RETIRING? Ten-room, modern home, in quiet, neighborly community, Maine, fine condition. Box 267-H.

YOUNG MAN, versatile, sincere, refined, slight physical deformity, desires correspondence with a slightly physically handicapped girl. Box 268-H.

SOPHISTICATE would exchange stimulating letters with interesting, intelligent and intrepid female seeking ecstatic, epistolary exhilaration. Box 211-H.

FREE PAMPHLETS on education available by writing Secretary to the Dean, Long Island University, 380 Pearl St., Brooklyn 1, N.Y.

EUROPEAN WOMAN, German background, in 50's, experienced with newspaper, book-work wishes work as university house mother, librarian. Research assistant, etc. Box 174-H.

YOUNG WOMAN to take charge of home with three well behaved children 10-13 years. Can you swim, drive a car and cook one meal a day? Box 303-H.

EXPERIENCED WOMAN travel companion available, July, August, for women or children. Box 310-H.

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IS THERE a cultured, liberal, good-natured man, neither old nor young, interested in people and literature or art, who would enjoy corresponding with a slightly younger woman of like attributes? Box 332-H.

MINIATURE POODLES, black, brown. The Companion of the Literate. Puppies, $100. Vollnhofer, Colfax, California.

WANTED: gentleman to share writer's beautiful secluded Maine hilltop. May-September or part of. Box 333-H.



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## PERSONALS

TWO VERSATILE FEMALES, young French teachers, want summer travel abroad. Box 311-H.

FOLLOW IN the ethical-dietetical footsteps of these great vegetarians, Plato, Aristole, Socrates, Alexander, Pope, Shelley, Voltaire, Gandhi, Richard Wagner, Tolstoi, Thoreau. Free details. Box 133-D.

SUMMER IN N.Y.C. can be lovely in nine-room furnished apartment, river-view, four-way breezes, piano, Bendix, near Columbia. References. May 28-Sept. 15, $800. Box 312-H.

AUTHOR, rather lonely, seeks correspondence with lass combining much understanding with feminine sweetness. Box 313-H.

FEMALE, 23, M.A. Humanities, University of Chicago, reads French, Spanish, interested in position in Europe, beginning late August. Studying in Scotland, June-August. Box 314-H.

FOR SALE: House with attached furnished guest house, Aspen, Colorado. Center of world famous ski area and summer mountain sports. Comfort for 14. Three full bathrooms. 1 completely modern kitchen. 1 modern kitchenette. Oil heating units. 5 blocks from ski tow. Booming community. For quick sale, $30,000. Mrs. V. W. Blanning, Kris Kottage, Aspen, Colo.

WORLDLY YOUTH, seeks salaried entente with gentleman as factorum-companion. Nimble, amiable, useful anywhere. Box 315-H.

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GAL ADRIFT will write urban male interested driving (car, of course), water (onto, into) music (listening, whistling, dining, dancing) Box 316-H.

YOUNG MAN desires English or social studies teaching position. Particulars on request. Box 317 H.

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IS THERE SOMEONE WILLING to gamble time and energy writing plot and dialogue for adventure-type cartoon strip now in the idea stage? Box 318-H.

SAD SAM solicits smiling similes from some sympathetic Sue. Box 319-H.

MODERN, YOUNG MAN, bored with theatre, arts, dull people, desires to correspond with an attractive, modern girl who enjoys life, books, people. Please—no vain creatures. Box 320-H.

DARTHMOUTH SENIOR and wife desires summer tutoring, child-care, whatnot. Box 321-H.

LADY, cultured Russian background, exchange letters with mature, cultivated, moderately honest gentleman. Box 322-H.

QUIET CHAP, interested travel, country living, all esthetic pursuits, would correspond with similarly minded. Box 323-H.

YOUNG WOMAN, outdoor type, many indoor interests, desires male correspondence. Box 324-H.

SERIOUS, YOUNG PHYSICAL SCIENCE graduate student, veteran, omniverous nonfiction reader and collector, interested puzzles, chess, languages, and mathematics but not music or sports, desires feminine correspondent with interests beyond finery and gossip. Box 325-H.

TRAVEL HUNGARY. Finances low. Will sell recipe famous Cape to Cairo, yes, even Moscow as "Pat's Waffles". $1.00. Please? Box 326-H.

PIANIST, M.M. degree, 5 years college teaching experience, desires position in or near Washington, D.C. Box 327-H.

SKENEWOOD: Vacation for boys, 12-17. Limited enrollment enables us to guarantee unregimented, friendly, home-like atmosphere, located on Lake Champlain in Adirondacks. All sports, excellent references. Write Gerald LaGrange, Taft School, Watertown, Conn.

SUMMER SECRETARY, congenial young woman, experienced magazine, book, radio, research editor, wants summer away from N.Y.C. German, French. Likes children, cooking, gardening, driving. Room and board propositions considered. Box 328-H.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN wants quiet week-ends in country near N.Y.C. Box 329-H.

YOUNG MAN seeks unaffected maiden sharing lively enthusiasm for music, art, books. Box 330-H.

## PERSONALS

COLLEGE SENIOR, man, pianist, boogie-woogie—Bach wants play for good resort hotel, mountains, lake region, during summer. Excellent typist. Good background. Box 336-H.

PERSONABLE EUROPEAN LADY, 34, with daughter 12 would help in country your domestic problems, children, etc. Summer or permanent. Box 337-H.

BERMUDA—FOR RENT, well-furnished cottages on waterfront, near Hamilton. Box 203 Hamilton, Bermuda.

INTERESTED IN DOLL COLLECTING? Free booklist on request. Box 586-D.

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COLLEGE PROFESSOR, 47, French, Spanish, German, personal knowledge western Europe, would guide family, group on European tour; act secretary to executive (background economics, journalism, business) July and August. Box 338-H.

BARTENDER; young, cleancut, desires full or part-time work. Elite references. Box 339-H.

PIANIST, music therapist, teacher, recreation leader, writer, available summer position. Resort, travelling. Box 341-H.

COLLEGE INSTRUCTOR wants intellectual stimulation and relaxation. Will work as tutor, chauffeur or companion for summer. Box 342-H.

COULD AN ISOLATED CHURCH or school use good current magazines which I hate to throw away? Box 343-H.

WHERE'S OSCAR? Why he's taking the new Adco Educational Rating Exam. It teases and tests your IQ! Individually scored. 50c. ADCO, Dept. C, Box 123, Station "P", Brooklyn 12, N.Y.

IN-BETWEENISH, curious but practical miss, outdoors lover, invites correspondence with congenial gentleman. Box 344-H.

FOR SALE: Built 1723, farmhouse, buildings, good condition, fireplace, furtile fields, woods, brook, view, near Dover, N.H. $11,700. Thaxter, Kittery Point, Maine.

PRINCETON SOPHOMORE, literary, journalistic aspirations, seeks summer employment NYC or Chicago area. Box 345-H.

ATTRACTIVE, adventurous college junior, English major, seeks summer job anywhere. Will travel, cook, tutor, farm, childcare, anything. Box 346-H.

DOCTOR, with artistic background and social vision, desires feminine correspondence. Box 347-H.

WIDOW, well educated, music, languages, seeks part-time position, adaptable companion. Will travel. References. Box 348-H.

## PERSONALS

FOR RENT: June-October. Park Avenue, low 60's. Unusually attractive 2 rooms, kitchenette, all services included, $1,000. season. Box 349-H.

DESIRE to rent small furnished cottage or camp in Connecticut for summer months. Seclusion and quiet required. Vicinity east of Connecticut preferred. Box 331-H.

REDDING, CONNECTICUT. Owner going abroad will rent to suitable persons furnished 200-year-old 8 room house, 2-car garage, $200. monthly. Telephone; Georgetown 450.

GENTLEMAN, interested art, Israel rebirth invites correspondence female liberal views. Box 334-H.

SALE: 65 acre farm, will make excellent summer home, 3 miles from town, 1½ story brick building, modern conveniences, good road, splendid view Ascutney and White mountains. Write: W. Salo, Box 157, Chester, Vt.

NAVAL OFFICER, single, much travelled, correspondence with mature female. Box 335-H.

## VACATIONS

ENJOY OLD WORLD CHARM in Ameria's oldest city. ALENCIA HOTEL, St. Augustine, Florida.

MERRIEBROOK, Poughquag, New York. Delightful peaceful homestead. Adults only. Tempting meals. Inexpensive. North Clove 2421.

GREEN SHADOWS, Lyme, Conn., quiet informal country life; good food, comfortable beds.

COUNTRY VACATION! SUDBURY INN on Lake Hortania, Sudbury, Vermont. Superlative food, Crow-bar.

WEED FARM, EAST MONTPELIER, Vermont. Comfort, delicious food, swimming, beautiful landscape.

YOUR SON FED UP WITH CAMP? Investigate the Prarie Trek Expedition to American Southwest. Opportunities for amateur journalists, naturalists, radio operators. Two months of field work under competent staff. Prospectus available. Hillis L. Howie, Community School, 900 Lay Road, St. Louis 24, Mo.

MT. DESERT ISLAND, MAINE—Waterfront cottage, July–August. Accommodates four. Electric refrigeration, gas cooking, modern plumbing. Superb view. Box 221-H.

LIKE THE COUNTRY? Come to Graymont, a Colonial farmhouse. Good food. R. D. 2, Middlebury, Vermont.

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# DOUBLE-CROSTIC No. 788

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

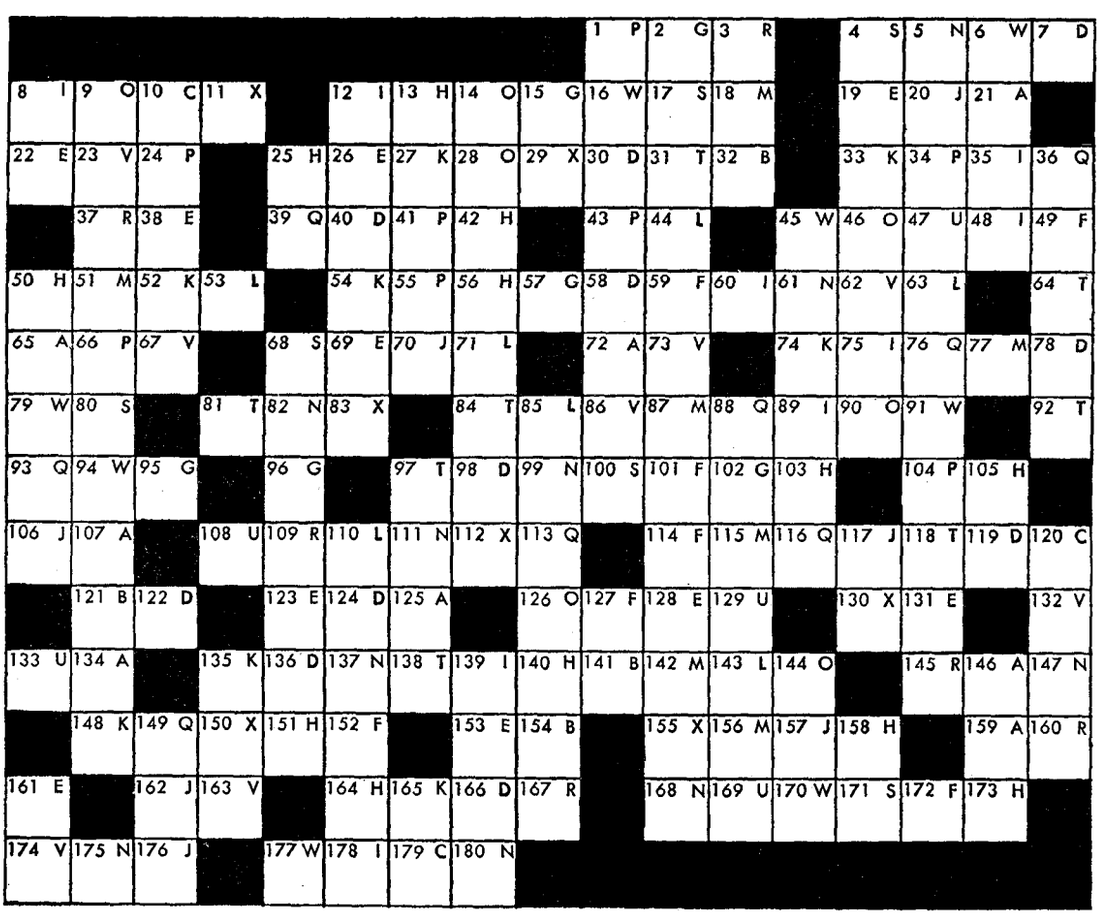
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

| DEFINITIONS | WORDS |
|---|---|
| A. A pool in Jerusalem; a hallowed place (Bib.). | 159 134 72 146 125 107 21 65 |
| B. Alone (Latin; chiefly used in stage directions and the like). | 154 141 32 121 |
| C. Having a dulled but even surface. | 179 10 120 |
| D. A large swift bird dog, rich golden-chestnut or mahogany in color (2 wds.). | 40 98 136 119 124 166 7 30 122 78 58 |
| E. Italian baritone once with *The Metropolitan Opera Co.* (full name). | 161 153 22 123 19 26 69 131 38 128 |
| F. Raised by means of tackle, as a sail. | 49 127 59 172 152 101 114 |
| G. A personification of the sky (Gr. myth.). | 96 95 15 2 57 102 |
| H. Son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul (Bib.). | 164 42 56 140 13 103 25 158 151 50 105 173 |
| I. To come to pass; to result. | 89 12 60 8 48 75 178 139 35 |
| J. American architect (1818-95; St. Patrick's Cathedral, Smithsonian Institution, etc.). | 157 176 20 162 106 70 117 |
| K. Deceiving by false show. | 52 135 148 165 74 27 33 54 |
| L. Nuts (fruit) of the *Anacardium occidentale*. | 53 85 44 71 63 110 143 |
| M. Capital of a New England State. | 87 142 77 156 18 51 115 |
| N. An instrument for photographing clouds. | 61 147 180 175 99 137 5 111 168 82 |
| O. Emancipated (2 wds.). | 90 144 9 126 14 28 46 |
| P. Having the power or quality of making permanent. | 41 104 55 43 1 34 66 24 |
| Q. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in literature, 1939. | 116 93 36 39 149 88 76 113 |
| R. A novel by Andy Adams (with "The"; 1905). | 37 160 145 109 3 167 |
| S. Guiding or controlling idea manifested in a work of art. | 68 4 80 171 100 17 |
| T. Biblical judge who sacrificed his daughter to keep a vow. | 84 118 97 138 81 64 31 92 |
| U. One of "The Three Musketeers." | 108 129 133 169 47 |
| V. A small violin (Fr.; music). | 86 73 62 23 163 174 132 67 |
| W. Having reference to something not fully expressed. | 45 177 170 16 79 6 94 91 |
| X. The use of expressions not yet sanctioned by conventional good usage. | 29 83 155 11 130 150 112 |

### DIRECTIONS

*To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.*

*When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).*




Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 38 of this issue.



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# SRL RECORDINGS SECTION

## IMPRESSIONS

THE DEATH since our last issue of Jack Kapp, president and virtual creator of the Decca Company, has removed from the record industry one of its most vital and forceful personalities. As one who rose from stock boy to executive in the best American tradition of Horatio Alger, Kapp's influence extended, through the ventures he sponsored, to millions who never heard his name or knew of his existence.

Though Kapp once accused me of being the "product of a vicious system" because I valued Marian Anderson's singing of Schubert's "Ave Maria" more greatly than I did Bing Crosby's, I knew then as I know now that it was not because he esteemed Schubert less, but because he loved Crosby more. And well he might, for it was the services of Crosby (and one or two other artists) from which he created the company which lived to become a "major" where dozens of other independents had failed. If it was boldness in 1934 to offer a list of prominent popular performers on a record selling for 35¢, it was also an act of faith in the power that reposes in recorded music. Furthermore, if we can savor today the spirit of the original "Oklahoma!," "Carousel," "Annie Get Your Gun," and "This Is the Army" (among many others) it is because the boldness and the faith were never corrupted by the two evils of success: conservatism and smugness.

It is typical of Kapp's absorption in the business in which he spent his life that he should consider, as a hobby, the collection of considerable documentary material bearing on its evolution. Though the recording art has flourished in this country for fifty years, there is nowhere an archive of records or such historical matter to which a student of the past and its products can turn for illumination. The Kapp collection, as a nuclear element of such an archive, would be a form of memorial to him most fitting.

Some months ago we made mention of a remarkable collection of discs assembled by Philip L. Miller at the New York Public Library—now numbering about 10,000—which would be of inestimable educational and cultural use were it to be placed on active duty. Certainly the record is no less faithful a mirror of contemporary society than the books and periodicals to which one turns in a library. It would be a notable contribution to the progress and development of recording were the funds to make that collection accessible, to create the archive the subject merits, raised and administered in the name of Kapp. The industry could honor both itself and one of its inquiring spirits by participating wholeheartedly in such a venture.

IRVING KOLODIN,
EDITOR, *SRL* RECORDINGS.

**MAY 1949**

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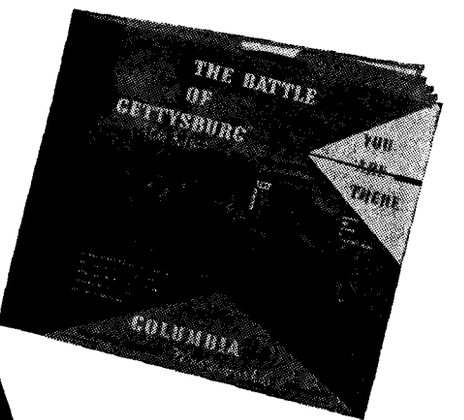


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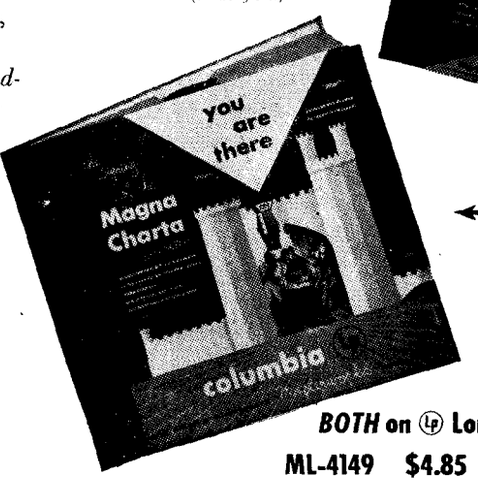


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*The Saturday Review of Recordings*

# *Soviet Music and Russian Esthetics*

GERALD ABRAHAM

IT IS not unusual to hear the Soviet attitude to advanced contemporary art equated with Hitler's. I have often equated it myself. Earth hath not anything to show more rich than the spectacle of the cultured Bolshevist denouncing what used to be known as *Kulturbolschewismus*, anathemising as "Western" and "bourgeois" the sort of pictures and poems and music that the average Western bourgeois detests. And it is, of course, true that the old Nazi attitude and the present Soviet attitude come to the same thing in the end: a heavy preference for conservatism—for the music of such composers as Pfitzner in the Third Reich and Shaporin in the USSR (both admirable of their kind, of course)—and official persecution of truly modern art, which is (or was) in both cases labeled "decadent" and associated with persons obnoxious to the regime, in the one case "Jews," in the other "the esthetes of the pluto-democracies." Yet there is one distinction to be made: the commissar denouncing Shostakovich and Prokofieff has behind him a far longer and more solid critical tradition than the *gauleiter* who used to rave against Hindemith and Schönberg. The artistic conservatism of the Third Reich was just ordinary artistic conservatism made vicious by the nationalistic frenzy of the *Judenhetze;* the artistic conservatism of the Soviet Union is also a nationalistic manifestation, as I hope to show in a moment, but it has behind it an old and not illogical philosophy of art: a philosophy by no means specifically Marxist, but peculiarly Russian.

When the late A. A. Zhdanov addressed the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the subject of music, not long before his death, he had no difficulty at all in finding suitable quotations in support of his point of view from the writings of the most eminent Russian music critics of the nineteenth century. He was able to quote from Stassov, friend and propagandist of Mussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, and the rest of the "Mighty Handful":

> It would be ridiculous to deny science or knowledge in any field, music included, but only the new Russian musicians, who do not have behind them a historical background inherited from previous centuries, from a long chain of scholastic periods in Europe, can look science bravely in the eye; they respect it and enjoy the benefits it confers, but without overdoing it, without being obsequious to it. They deny the necessity of its dry and pedantic excesses, they deny its gymnastic diversions to which thousands of people in Europe attach such importance, and do not believe that it is necessary to spend years on end in nothing but humble worship of its sacred mysteries.

(Stassov's article is significantly entitled "Some Hindrances to the New Russian Art.") And Zhdanov was also able to quote from Stassov's youthful friend but bitter antagonist of later years, the critic-composer Serov, the dictum that "just as the lily outshines the brilliance of brocades and precious stones, so folk-music—thanks to its childlike simplicity—is a thousand times richer and stronger than all the artifices of learning taught by pedants in the conservatories and musical academies." Serov was a "Westerner," the champion of Wagner and "Zukunftism," but he could agree with his enemy in preferring folk music (*i.e.*, Russian folk music) to the artifices and "gymnastic diversions" (*i.e.*, strict counterpoint and fugue and "thematic development") taught in the conservatories: what the Soviet critic today calls "formalism." Their views were shared by Balakirev, the young Rimsky - Korsakov, above all by the young Mussorgsky. Music, for them, must be simple and direct, the immediate expression of emotion, of "life," of "truth." And, of course, they were right in despising technical ingenuity for its own sake; where they were wrong was in identifying the contrapuntal mastery that is simply a means to an end, a

—*Sovfoto.*

**The late A. A. Zhdanov—"the cultural outlook of the average Congressman who 'knows nothing about music but knows what he likes'."**



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technique for constructing living music, with the dead counterpoint of the schoolmen.

The best Russian literary critics of the same period and earlier—Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov—were saying pretty much the same things: art must deal with realities, must place itself at the service of "life," of ideas. It did not exist for its own sake—and to study technique overmuch was to study technique for technique's sake. Everyone who reads these lines will recollect how these principles were echoed by Mussorgsky in various, often quoted passages from his letters; and most people who read these lines will remember how the same ideas were heated up again by Tolstoy in that formidable tract "What Is Art?" All this was a very natural consequence of Czarist repression; when the arts were practically the only means through which intelligent men could express themselves freely, it seemed almost criminally frivolous to create works of art in an ivory tower on Parnassian heights. There has thus existed for nearly a hundred years a firmly held belief in Russia—often attacked, it is true, but defended by some of her best minds—that art should be direct, simple, and expressive, serving a purpose.

ON the other hand, even the Czarist authorities realized in their more intelligent moments that art-with-a-content could be a powerful instrument of propaganda; that point, too, was enlarged upon by Tolstoy in "What Is Art?"; what could be more natural than that a government wielding even greater power than the Czar's, and far more efficient, should determine that all Russian art must serve its purpose? The circumstance that the government in question is Marxist is almost accidental, the real point is that it is Russian. An old Russian theory of esthetics has been renamed "Socialist realism" and interlocked with dialectical materialism in just the same way that international Communism has been interlocked with the old mystical Pan-Slav belief in Russia's mission as the "God-bearing nation" that was to unite the whole world in brotherly (Christian) love, of Moscow as "the Third Rome." (That ancient Slavophile war cry was actually trotted out by Eisenstein in his "Ivan the Terrible" film.) The whole thing hangs together beautifully. Even the esthetic theory is to a great extent a piece of Russian self-flattery. Mussorgsky was not only a realist but a nationalist; Stassov praises his friends, "the new Russian musicians," because they are free of European scholasticism; Tolstoy holds that the simple *muzhik* has healthier taste than the admirers of Wagner and the French symbolist poets. The antithesis is always between healthy Russian simplicity on the one hand and Western academicism or decadence or Parnassianism on the other.

The trouble is that wherever you have genuine artists, you will sooner or later (and usually sooner than later) find them worrying about their art, about how they practise it, in other words, about technique. And if an artist comes along at a certain period in history, he must almost inevitably—as the dialectical materialists ought to be the first to admit—work with the techniques of that period. (Or beyond them, but not with outworn techniques.) A truly live musician can no more compose simple diatonic music in the middle of the twentieth century than capitalist combines can open chain stores all over the USSR; the time for both is historically past. But the Soviet Government has not yet managed to grasp that simple truth and the history of Soviet music, ever since the doctrine of "Socialist realism" was put forward in the 1930's, is a history of composers thinking and writing as men of their own age, being rapped over the knuckles for doing so, and perhaps honestly, perhaps with tongues in cheeks, trying to turn themselves into back-numbers, but then willy-nilly slipping forward again. It is true the Soviet Government has sometimes tightened, sometimes slackened, its grip on the arts; but the vicissitudes of Shostakovich, Prokofieff, and the rest seem to be largely due to the abstractness and intangibility of music, at least of instrumental music. Writing and painting are definite and unmistakable in form and content, and Soviet painting has now been firmly reduced to the level of color photography (usually of such stirring subjects as "Joseph Stalin Addressing a Meeting in Celebration of the 26th Anniversary of the October Revolution"). But a symphony or a concerto allows the artist more rope; sooner or later he takes advantage of that, perhaps hardly consciously; sooner or later he gets pulled up with an all-the-harder jerk.

The official Soviet critics—and one cannot help suspecting that they are simple-minded men with the cultural outlook of the average Congressman or Member of Parliament who "knows nothing about music but knows what he likes"—have never faced the real problem of judging contemporary art. They adore both Tchaikovsky and Mussorgsky without realizing that in their own day each condemned the other for being what would nowadays be called "formalistic": Mussorgsky despised Tchaikovsky as a Parnassian, "an admirer of absolute musical beauty," over-preoccupied with and spoiled by "Western" techniques; while Tchaikovsky in turn regarded Mussorgsky as a purveyor of the wilfully ugly. Both "emptiness" and "ugliness" are now signs of formalism. The passage of time has of course wiped away both those false judgments, but Soviet officials of the Zhdanov type have never recognized that such judgments are extremely liable to be false just because they are contemporary. Nor will they admit that Mussorgsky, Glinka, Dargomizhsky, and others committed in their day, and were accused by their contemporaries of committing, all the sins that almost every outstanding Soviet composer commits today—and gets into hot water for committing.

Glinka, Dargomizhsky, Mussorgsky are now classics: part of the great heritage of Russian culture. Therefore they can never have composed "discordant noises altogether disagreeable to the normal ear" or anything of that kind, no matter what their stupid contemporaries said. Indeed this statute of limitations covers all the classics, foreign as well as Russian, literary as well as musical; they have a "universal value" that has nothing to do with ideology. Tolstoy was at least logical when he denounced not only the "Western decadents" of his own day but the great bulk of serious classical music into the bargain; he was quite logical in arguing from the premises of Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky and himself that a folk song or popular march is of more value to humanity than the Choral Symphony. But it is preposterous to evade what looks like the reduction to absurdity by saying that the Choral Symphony is a classic and that (inferentially) the premises are invalid so far as the classics are concerned.

Even Scriabin, who went a good deal further in the direction of "confused and discordant noise" than Shostakovich has ever done and whose music is moreover infected with "decadent" and "idealist" ideology of the most alarming kind, seems to be a classic. But the veteran pianist, A. B. Goldenweiser, an outstanding exponent of Scriabin's music and one of the editors of the Soviet edition of Scriabin (which includes even the most extreme post-"Promethean" works), is duly revolted by formalism. On the occasion of the Zhdanov speech already referred to, Goldenweiser is reported as having said:

> I am tired of wrong notes. The music written by our leading composers—and in imitation of them by most other composers—violates the harmony required by the normal musical ear. The sense of dissonance (that is, of emotional tension striv-

(*Continued on page* 55)



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# *Report on LP: How They Sound—II*

READERS are reminded that in this continuation of the guide inaugurated last month the only comparison made is between the qualities of recorded sound on Columbia LP microgroove and standard 78 rpm discs, respectively, of the same performance. The merits of the work performed, and the performance itself, are not in question. The notation cpm refers to the cost, in cents per minute, of the recorded editions listed.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartet No. 4 in C Minor, Opus 18, No. 4. Budapest Quartet.* (78 rpm in Columbia album 556, $4. Duration 22m 6s.)

HAYDN: *Quartet No. 30 in G Minor ("Horseman"), Opus 74, No. 3. Budapest Quartet.* (78 rpm in Columbia album X-274, $3. Duration 16m 34s. LP of both on Columbia ML 4029, $4.85. Combined duration 38m 40s. Cpm: 78 rpm, 18.10; LP, 12.54.)

Murkiness of viola and cello in both 78's is absent from the LP's, where these instruments are clear and mellow. In compensation the 78's are free of the asperity which characterizes the violin tone of the LP's. On the whole one seems as good as the other. The LP's are tonally far above the three LP quartets compared last month.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 6 in F ("Pastoral"), Opus 68. Bruno Walter conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra.* (78 rpm in Columbia album 631, $6. LP on Columbia ML 4010, $4.85. Duration 37m 32s. Cpm: 78 rpm, 15.99; LP, 12.92.)

With its reverberant bass the standard version occasionally sounds as if it had been recorded in the profundities of the subway. The LP, shifting emphasis to the middle and upper middle frequencies, often sounds as if it had been recorded in a capacious tin. Oppressed by this, by obscurities in the bass, odd variations of volume, and distortions at loud passages, the microgroove must be called a failure.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 8 in F, Opus 93. Bruno Walter conducting the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.* (78 rpm in Columbia album 525, $4. LP on Columbia ML 2001, $3.85. Duration 23m 47s. Cpm: 78 rpm, 16.80; LP, 16.18.)

The 78 rpm recording is opulent and juicy and the tone of the LP is cramped and dry throughout. One cannot but prefer the standard version.

MOZART: *Concerto for Two Pianos in E Flat, K.365. Vronsky and Babin; Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting the RHD Orchestra of Philadelphia.* (78 rpm in Columbia album 628, $4. Duration 24m 20s.)

MOZART: *Concerto for Three Pianos in F, K.242. Lhevinne, Vronsky and Babin, T. K. Scherman conducting the Little Orchestra Society.* (78 rpm in Columbia album 771, $4. Duration 24m 6s. LP of both on Columbia ML 4098, $4.85. Combined duration 48m 26s. Cpm: 78 rpm, 16.52; LP, 10.01.)

This LP offers more music per dollar than any disc so far examined. The feature makes a choice perplexing indeed, for K.365 is to be preferred in the standard edition and K.242 is better on LP. On the microgroove K.365 has a small but annoying recurrent rattle; and the spiral leading from the first to the second movement infringes on the last playing-groove of the former, truncating the final chord. The 78 is free of these defects. Reinforced bass in the microgroove K.242 not only improves the three-piano tone, but gives Scherman's Little Orchestra the body it fails to show in the 78.

MOZART: *Operatic Arias. Ezio Pinza, Bruno Walter conducting the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.* (78 rpm in Columbia album 643, $5. LP on Columbia ML 4036, $4.85. Duration 27m. Cpm: 78 rpm, 18.52; LP, 17.96.)

No doubt the arbitrary assemblage on one disc of these six arias is an affront to LP's real utility, but the disc is no affront to the bass of Pinza or the orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera. LP is clearer, deeper, higher, and smoother than 78.

PROKOFIEFF: *"Classical" Symphony in D, Opus 25. Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra.* (78 rpm in Columbia album X-287, $3. Duration 12m.)

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *"Great Russian Easter." Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra.* (78 rpm in Columbia album X-276, $3. Duration 13m 36s. LP of both on Columbia ML 2035, $3.85. Combined duration 25m 36s. Cpm: 78 rpm, 23.44; LP, 15.04.)

Both LP's have an exuberant treble. This is too much for the reduced orchestra of the Prokofieff, where the violins screech beyond benefit of control. Contrarily, the Rimsky, if subjected to careful adjustment, surpasses the merits of its 78 equivalent. The dominating brass, the drums and cymbals are stunning (and nearly literally) in the LP, whereas in the 78 they are merely impressive. This LP side is caviar; but the other side is tripe.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 9 (Old No. 7) in C. Bruno Walter conducting the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.* (78 rpm in Columbia album 679, $7. LP on Columbia ML 4093, $4.85. Duration 47m 34s. Cpm: 78 rpm, 14.71; LP, 10.20.)

In comparison with the living liveness of the LP the 78 sounds swaddled and halt. Yet the performance is the same, and before the microgroove made it obsolete the standard did not seem so veiled and sodden. 78 offers a good impression of woodwind choir and brass: on LP we hear the flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons separate even when intertwined, and (may it be said?) *tangible* when alone. The true vibrancy of trombones (heroes in this work) has never been better caught, and yet the lucent instrumental detail does not encroach upon the prerogatives of orchestral ensemble. In short LP, on its mettle here in a recording no longer new, gives a breathtaking notion of its possibilities when it does not strive too much for the excitement of mere brittle brilliance. No other recorded Schubert No. 9 competes with this microgroove of Bruno Walter's.—C. G. BURKE.



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# Reviews of the Month

*Conductors are in the ascendance this month, with such fixed stars as Reiner ("Salome" excerpts), Beecham (a complete "Faust"), and Toscanini ("Manfred" and "Weihe des Hause" overtures) scarcely dimming the glow cast by Eduard van Beinum in the Bartók "Concerto for Orchestra." Add Herbert von Karajan ("Metamorphosen") and Koussevitzky ("Ma Mere L'Oye") and you have a half-dozen masters at work; more still with the re-appearance of Furtwängler and Willem Mengelberg on Capitol-Telefunken.*

## Strauss, Old and New

STRAUSS: *"Salome" (Final Scene). Ljuba Welitsch, with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner.* (Columbia album MX316, $2.95.)

STRAUSS: *"Metamorphosen." Herbert von Karajan conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.* (English Columbia LX1082/5, $9.17.)

If short of the complete "Salome," which would have added luster to Columbia's expanding list of newly recorded operas, one can scarcely turn a deaf ear to this impassioned, concentrated delivery of the passage beginning "Ah! Du woltest mich nicht deinem Mund" and proceeding to the end of the opera. It is a better representation of the Welitsch voice—lean, shimmering, full of brilliance and subtlety—than any of her European recordings yet released here, and a fervent affirmation of all the good things that were said about her appearances at the Metropolitan during the past season.

Reiner's work with the orchestra is, of course, of its own exceptional power and intensity, given back to us in potent richness and amplitude by the first major recording to appear from Columbia's new studio in New York City. Where there are no ultimate standards, this might be accepted as a new one; but for all its splendor of sound and general justice of balance, I find the string choir, for one thing, a little out of focus in some passages with the voice. Considering the intricacy of the scoring, however, and its manifold problems, the results are on the order of spectacular.

I include the recent "Metamorphosen" of Viennese origin in this space usually reserved for records of American production because of its importance in the Strauss catalogue: a work for strings alone, of half an hour's duration. To me it is a score of fascinating richness of invention, of masterful execution in a genre rarely explored. In it Strauss appears to have written (during March and April 1945 when the Allied troops were at his door) his own musical epitaph: for a quotation from the "Funeral March" of the "Eroica" at the very end indicates clearly that the main theme is a variation of that quotation, with the "hero" of "Ein Heldenleben" "metamorphosed" into the "hero" of the "Eroica." The splendor of the Vienna strings is another, hardly secondary, reason for recommending these fine discs.

## Bartók Hot, Bartók Cold

BARTOK: *Sonata No. 1 (1921). Yehudi Menuhin, violin, and Adolf Baller, piano.* (RCA Victor album 1286, $6.)

*"Concerto for Orchestra." Eduard van Beinum and the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam..* (English Decca album 105, $11.55.)

It is not inconceivable that historians of the future will resolve the dilemma of separating the two Bartóks known to us—the early writer of savagely dissonant, musically elusive works, the later creator of highly integrated, emotionally direct works—by concluding they were actually two different people. That convenience of history not being available to me, I must note, merely, that I find the work espoused by Menuhin as tedious, tortuous, and unattractive a score as I know; the Concerto a continually unfolding vista of Bartók's own career, something of an autobiography in tone.

One can understand, from the listening, the fascination such a score as this has for the performer; for the mere triumph over its technical difficulties—rhythmic intricacies, double-stoppings, bowing feats that almost call for an instrumentalist with a universal joint instead of an elbow, a swivel-mounted wrist—must be a deep and abiding satisfaction. But I listen to the music with wandering attention, and occasional outright irritation at its edgy conflicts of sound. Possibly these are the reactions Bartók sought to arouse in his listener; but why, I cannot imagine. Menuhin's tone is driven even beyond its normal quaver,

Ljuba Welitsch and Fritz Reiner listening to playbacks from the final scene of "Salome"—"Reiner's work . . . is of its own exceptional power and intensity. . . . The Welitsch voice [is] lean, shimmering, full of brilliance and subtlety."



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which is a considerable statement. The reproduction is admirable enough; but, to invert a cliché, the work leaves me not cold, but very hot—under the collar.

For Van Beinum's view of the Concerto (first noted here in the performance by Reiner, RECORDINGS for January 1949) I have a deep and ever-increasing sympathy. His evaluation is more lyric than Reiner's, and I think validly so. Due in part to one of the finest of the many fine recording accomplishments by the Decca technicians, there is an amazing sheen over the orchestral sound, a definition of textures and effects not to be heard even in the concert hall. I have referred to this as an autobiography in tone; why else the curious references to snatches of a Viennese popular tune (the "Maxim" strain from "The Merry Widow"), the allusions to Hungarian gypsy tunes, a likeness to Smetana's "Moldau" here, or Kodaly's "Hary Janos" there? When I heard its first concert performance by Szell, the subtitle "Old World Concerto" seemed appropriate; and half a dozen hearings since then have intensified a sense of the nostalgia it conveys, more profoundly by Van Beinum than Reiner.

## *Drama and Consecration*

SCHUMANN: *"Manfred" Overture*; BEETHOVEN: *"Consecration of the House." Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Orchestra.* (RCA Victor album 1287, $4.75.)

Admirers of the "Manfred" overture —which must be limited largely to those who wore out either the Boult or Marinuzzi recordings, for it is rarely heard in the concert hall—will find their highest expectations of the work fulfilled in this surging, remarkably imaginative performance by Toscanini. It is, I would say, just about the ultimate of what the "Manfred" can be, with wholehearted attention to all the facets of this score (including the typically Brahmsian orchestration, much before Brahms "invented" it).

With the Toscanini estimate of Beethoven's "Consecration of the House" I am less in agreement. Something of that tension which now and then in his performances makes electrifying what should merely be stimulating swirls through the work; and in place of spacious jubilation we have skin-tightening frenzy. He gets through it, incidentally, something more than a minute faster than Fiedler does in his finely phrased performance with the Boston "Pops" orchestra, a difference of consequence in a work totaling about ten minutes in all. Also there is a dry sound in the reproduction which betrays its origin in 8H; the fuller-sounding "Manfred" was made in Carnegie Hall.

## *Liquid Gigli*

LALO: *"Aubade" ("Le Roi D'Ys"). Beniamino Gigli, tenor, with orchestra conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni.* (RCA Victor 12-0767, $1.25.)

It is too long since a properly qualified tenor gave us a contemporary recording of this charming air, though it has attracted the talents of more than a dozen from Edmond Clement to Tino Rossi. How recent this Gigli disc is, I do not know; but it reveals the voice at its purest, most enchanting, and considerately used. I care less for the overside "Ai nostri monti" from "Trovatore," whose requirements are heavy for the best sound of Gigli's voice, though Cloe Elmo sings her portion of the duet superbly. Both are remarkably good recordings; European, of course. —IRVING KOLODIN.

## *Operatic Milestone*

GOUNOD: *"Faust." Geori-Boué, soprano, Georges Noré, tenor, Roger Bourdin, baritone, Roger Rico, basso, and other vocalists, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham.* (RCA Victor albums 1300 and 1301, $22.)

The fundamental question raised by the recent Toscanini broadcasts of "Aida"—whether or not, in an opera intended primarily for singers, it is desirable to use a group of artists whose prestige and authority do not quite stack up against those of the maestro—rises again after a hearing of the new "Faust" album, recorded in its entirety by a cast of French artists under the direction of Sir Thomas Beecham in the London studios of HMV, available here by RCA Victor.

*—French Embassy Information Division.*
**Geori - Boué — "quite the best as Marguerite."**

In many ways, the new version of the Gounod work represents a milestone in operatic recording. In few other albums does one find the magnificent range of sonorities as in the Beecham "Faust." Not only does the conductor—one of the most sensitive colorists in his profession—extract every bit of drama and tonal nuance from the score. The assisting engineers have also created a sound atmosphere that is perhaps the nearest thing to a theatrical experience available so far to record collectors. Indeed, the church scene is finer on records than in the opera house because of the depth of the organ background—a level not to be achieved with the modest backstage consoles in our theatres; and the apotheosis of the last act, usually glossed over in stage performances of "Faust," enjoys a resonance in the recording that makes it the proper crown of the work.

Other high points of the set are the introduction to the garden scene, in which Sir Thomas is at his lyrical best; the conductor's welcomely brisk tempo in the "Soldiers' Chorus," saving this passage from banality and bringing instead an unaccustomed swing and vigor; and the fine-spun pianissimo of the waltz when it appears in the prison scene as background to Marguerite's madness.

The singers, however, are something else again. Of the cast, Mme. Geori-Boué — well known as a Gounod specialist—is quite the best as Marguerite. Much of her work is moving and well sung; but Georges Noré, as Faust, Roger Bourdin, as Valentin, and Roger Rico, in the part of Mephistopheles, do little to eradicate the memories of really great singers heard in these roles. They are all adequate, but small-scale and submissive in a score that needs the grand vocal line to make it viable. Lacking virtuoso profile, Gounod's "Faust"—with its bland melodic style—can suggest an endless row of caramel custards.

Standard cuts have been made in this album. In accordance with a Paris Opéra tradition, the baritone aria "Avant de quitter ces lieux" (interpolated by Gounod after the première) is omitted. One would willingly have voted, in line with these same traditions, for inclusion of the "Walpurgis Night" music, familiar only to French audiences; but the recording in sum represents the work as given in leading theatres. The Beecham "Faust" is orchestrally first class. With great singing to match the qualities of the conducting and engineering, it could have been an operatic monument. —ROBERT LAWRENCE.



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# Recordings Reports on Classical Releases

*See Page 61 for Pop Releases*

| WORK, PERFORMER, DATA | REPORT |
|---|---|
| Beethoven: Symphony No. 6. Erich Kleiber conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra. English Decca album 95, $11.55. | Reverential treatment that inclines to the quiescent in some of the slower passages, with no notable virtues elsewhere. Rich sound, of course, but not a match for Toscanini's comprehension (RCA) or Walter's expressiveness (Columbia). |
| Bloch: Quartet No. 2. Griller Quartet. English Decca album 93, $11.55. | A duplication of the impressive recent work of the venerable Bloch, played by the ensemble which introduced it to America two seasons ago. The playing lacks something of the rugged accentuation heard from the Stuyvesant Quartet records, but it has great clarity of detail, fine articulation of structure. Both recordings are tonally excellent, but the Decca surfaces are as conspicuously quiet as the Stuyvesant's were annoyingly audible. |
| Godard: "Berceuse" ("Jocelyn"). James Melton, tenor, with orchestra directed by Frank Black. RCA Victor 12-0764, $1.25. | The Ur-text of this sentimental favorite, delivered with nasal tones and strained phrasing by Melton. With it is Franck's "Panis Angelicus," which one should hear from McCormack or not at all. |
| Liszt: "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2." Arthur Fiedler conducting the Boston "Pops" Orchestra. RCA Victor 12-0763, $1.25. | A somewhat more sedate version than the gypsyish one which Ormandy produced for Columbia some months ago; there is virtual parity in orchestral performance, a bit more brightness in the RCA sound. Perhaps this satisfies the "gout Boston" better, but Liszt should not be denied the seasoning his recipe asks. |
| Liszt: "Les Preludes." Leopold Stokowski conducting his orchestra. RCA Victor set 1277, $2.50. | Unquestionably the premier "Preludes" of our time, combining the clamor and contrast of the old Mengelberg with the care of the more recent Weingartner. As may be expected, something of Stokowski himself creeps into the stylish playing, which is splendidly reproduced in the "Sleeping Beauty" manner. |
| Mahler: Eight Songs: Desi Halban, soprano, with Bruno Walter, piano. Columbia album 809, $3.40. | Additions to the Mahler song literature on records are always welcome, especially as this group includes only one ("Hans und Gretel") which may be called familiar. Miss Halban sings intelligently in a lightly lyric voice, but I would not call the recording a technical triumph. The balance is satisfactory, but the piano tone is like something from the departed days of horn recording. |
| Mozart: Quartet in C, K. 465. Griller Quartet. English Decca album 97, $9.45. | I prefer more color and variety in my Mozart, but of its chaste, closely guarded style, this performance is extremely good; very clean in detail and with never a gross accentuation. The fulness of sound, too, is something that cannot be found in the Budapest of a decade ago. |
| Paganini: "Caprices" (Nos. 9, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 24). Zino Francescatti, violin, with Artur Balsam, piano. Columbia album 818, $4.25. | Paganini's caprices should be recorded, and Francescatti is a sound choice to do them; but why with piano accompaniments by Mario Pilati? He not only makes counter points that conflict with Paganini's own, but adds—in No. 13 especially—Kreislerish harmonies that are not at all indicated by Paganini's. The consequence, I think, is heard in Francescatti's playing, which is uncharacteristically slushy, due to the debilitating piano parts. |
| Ravel: "Ma Mere L'Oye." Serge Koussevitzky conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor set 1268, $2.50. | As one of the happiest efforts of the early days of Koussevitzky's recording career, a new version of this is a release long overdue. His conception of it, as those who have heard it in concert know, is an uncommonly sophisticated one; and it is realized here with every nuance intact. Beautiful playing, reproduced with skill. |
| Schubert: "Introduction, Theme and Variations" (Op. 82, No. 2); Schumann: "Fantasiestücke, No. 1"; Fauré: "Elegie." Gregor Piatigorsky, cello, with Ralph Berkowitz, piano. Columbia album 808, $3.95. | The theory that a duet written by Schubert for piano can be transformed into a virtuoso piece for cello is not one that would occur, very likely, to anyone but a virtuoso cellist. Some absurd runs and flourishes mar Schubert's simple thought. Piatigorsky is more musicianly in the Schumann and Fauré works. All the reproduction is good. |
| Schubert: Quartet in D minor ("Death and the Maiden"). Fine Arts Quartet. Mercury album 14, $6.56. | A live-sounding replacement for the outmoded performances of the Busch and Roth quartets. The young players are inclined to fast tempi and a little lack of rhythmic security, but there is no question of their alert interest in what they play. I would make any recommendation a qualified one, as there is an English recording by the Philharmonia Quartet which may be superior. |
| Schumann: Concerto in A minor. Moura Lympany, piano, with the London Symphony conducted by Alistair Royalton-Kisch. English Decca album 96, $9.45. | The best piano playing I have heard from Miss Lympany—forceful, well controlled, serious but spirited. This is something in the way of a distinction for her rather than a recommendation for the reading, since I find the recent Rubinstein nevertheless more expert in its phrasing and nuances. Royalton-Kisch is a new name to me, and one which promises to become familiar. As recording, this is the best known to me of the Schumann. |
| Strauss: "Rosenkavalier" Waltzes. Arthur Fiedler conducting the Boston "Pops" Orchestra. RCA Victor 12-0762, $1.25. | A utility version of the favorite waltzes, noted as "after Otto Singer's arrangement, orchestrated by J. Doebber." Rather mechanical work by Fiedler, with not much charm in the whole presentation.<br>—Irving Kolodin. |



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# 3/4, 6/8, & Other Good Times

## *Two Times 3/4*

STRAUSS: *"Die Fledermaus" and "Zigeunerbaron" Overtures. Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra.* (Columbia album MX 311, $2.95.)

It is one of the rigorous realities of musical, as well as other kinds of life, that affection displayed by one partner to a romance is not always returned by the other. I cite, as instance, the long flirtation of Eugene Ormandy with Johann Strauss, evident on records since his Minneapolis days. Occasionally a blandishment is reciprocated, as in Ormandy's brilliant "Pizzicato Polka"; but more often the conductor's bouquets have been rebuffed.

Here, for example, the whimsicalities affected by Ormandy give us a rather mincing, coquettish picture of Strauss in two of his most robust, unaffected works. Orchestral niceties are lavished on phrases which were meant to be direct and straightforward, giving the effect of exclamation points at the end of sentences which would not attract attention otherwise. It is all wonderfully executed by the loyal orchestra, but I prefer the more sober amenities practised by Walter in wooing these works.

## *Ragout à la Reiner*

BRAHMS: *"Hungarian Dances," Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 19, and 21. Fritz Reiner conducting the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.* (Columbia album MX 309, $2.95.)

At the risk of appearing a Reinerphile in this month of his "Salome" recording, I must also note the appearance of another enormously enjoyable album—made so by two things: the skill with which Brahms organized these folk tunes and the art with which the conductor has given them life, zest, and meaning in the orchestra. That tends to minimize the contributions of Dvorak and various others who enlarged the small number of dances orchestrated by Brahms himself, but that kind of liaison is mostly of a professional nature, not involving much creative skill.

Reiner, however, has seen in these dances an opportunity for a vivacity and strength of feeling customary, among other conductors of the day, only in Beecham. It is no mere accident that such a response to these works comes from a native of Budapest, for there is very much of a local flavor in Reiner's treatment of the shifting rhythms and quixotic moods that make up these pieces. As for the Pittsburgh Orchestra: it is led to feats of virtuosity which must have cost all involved at least the equivalent of Churchill's blood, toil, tears, and sweat. Here it is, however, for all to admire and some to envy.

## *Mine Host Kostelanetz*

STRAUSS: *"Thousand and One Nights"*; LEHAR: *"Gold and Silver," etc. Andre Kostelanetz and his orchestra.* (Columbia album 815, $4.95.)

To Columbia's proffer of this collection titled "Invitation to the Waltz," I can only send my regrets. I don't see an "RSVP" on the cover, but if it were there, I might reply: "For whom is the party? Strauss and Lehar, or Kostelanetz?" What I gather from the playing of the master's "Thousand and One Nights," Lehar's "Gold and Silver" and "Gypsy Love" waltzes, Kalman's "Sari," and others by Stolz, Sieczynski, and Oscar Straus, Kostelanetz has the equational effect of zero in this multiplication: because anything "times" Kostelanetz is equal only to Kostelanetz.

This may be an amiable and even uplifting skill on the radio, which has too few performers of his technical proficiency, energy, and musical enthusiasm, but it is small justification for perpetuation on records. However it is the paradox of the phonograph that some records are made only to be worn out and replaced; this collection would seem to be in that category. Certainly it could not be argued seriously that Kalman intended his "Sari" to move on such leaden feet, or Strauss his "Thousand and One Nights" with so little lightness, either from stars or moon.

## *Birds of a Feather*

STRAUSS, JOSEF: *"Village Swallows"*; SILCHER: *"Jubilate," etc. Erna Sack, soprano.* (Capitol-Telefunken album ECL 2500, $5.)

STRAUSS, JOHANN: *"Frühlingsstimmen"*; LEHAR: *"Vilja Lied," etc. Elfie Mayerhofer.* (London album 75, $7.)

As between nightingales, the listener may find himself as confused by advertising labels as by similarities in the styles of these two singers. For Capitol Miss Sack is, outside the album, "The European Nightingale"; on

**Erna Sack—a nightingale "for those who want to hear the tricks rather than the tunes."**

the first disc, "The German Nightingale" (this being a description of a potpourri by Drdla, a Hungarian, Johann Strauss, a Viennese, and Toselli, an Italian). For London, Miss Mayerhofer is merely "The Viennese Nightingale" . . . thus taking in less area, if one a bit more exclusive.

It is even possible to make a direct ornithological comparison, for Capitol's first release includes a separate record of the Strauss "Frühlingsstimmen" (No. 81000, $1.25) which is Miss Mayerhofer's best effort. I incline to the less mannered treatment of the younger singer, who has not yet reached quite the stage of exhibitionism attained by Sack. To be sure, she indulges in an octave leap from F to F above high C, and in neither record is it possible to distinguish any words after the opening "Die Lerche"; but the quota of musical pleasure in Miss Mayerhofer's effort is somewhat higher.

In the divergent items, Miss Mayerhofer acquaints us with a lively sense of humor in "Spiel' ich die Unschulde vom Lande" from "Fledermaus," and a beguiling tune in the "Himmlischer Walzer" by Ludwig Schmidseder; also some wiriness of tone in a full-length "Vilja." Hers is obviously a promising talent, with some vocal failings yet to be mastered.

Of mastery, there is no lack in Miss Sack's "Village Swallows," "Funiculi Funicula," the Patti-favored "Parla" waltz, the potpourri noted above, and Silcher's "Jubilate." She shows in the last of these (sung simply and with lovely tone) how fine a singer she can be when ornamentations are forgotten. Unfortunately, most of the other sides are so cluttered with trills and scales that their appeal is for those who want to hear the tricks rather than the tunes. It may be noted as a compliment to Telefunken that the recording of Miss Sack's voice—made, presumably, before the war—is hardly inferior to London's fine recent ffrr product from Switzerland.

—I. K.



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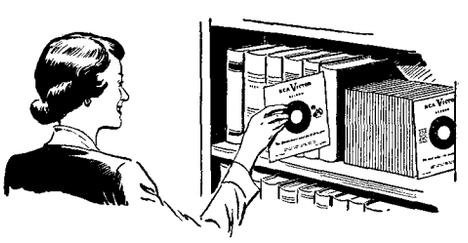

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# On Second Hearing

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The initiation by Capitol of releases from the Telefunken catalogue—releases in which enduring worth of material and interpretation are motivating factors, rather than mere fidelity of sound—and the prospect of similar reissues by other manufacturers have suggested this supplement to* REVIEWS OF THE MONTH *and* RECORDINGS REPORTS ON CLASSICAL RELEASES. *It will take in all such amplifications of the phonographic repertoire, regardless of source.*

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3 in E flat ("Eroica"). Willem Mengelberg conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam.* (Capitol-Telefunken album EFL 2502, $8.75.)

During the years of his Philharmonic conductorship, Mengelberg established for many of his listeners—this one included—a concept of the "Eroica" only occasionally approached since then, and never exceeded. There are the great lines of that concept in this performance, sagging however at the joints, and frequently obscured by corrupting over-refinements. Thus, each movement is launched on its course at an almost predestined tempo only to disintegrate sooner or later through retards, accelerandos, over-attention to detail. I commend this, certainly, to the earnest student of Beethoven who cares to study the remnants of a once powerful projection of the work: but not to those in search of a satisfying "Eroica." There is not much glow in the recorded sound, but a good weight of tone. Like all the issues so far received, the surface material is far more suitable to the requirements of quiet reproduction than the average non-plastic disc produced in this country at present.

BRUCKNER: *Mass in E minor. Hamburg State Opera Choir and Orchestra conducted by M. Thurn.* (Capitol-Telefunken album EEL 2504, $7.50.)

Those who don't know this work in its previously available form (in RCA Victor album 596) will discover in it perhaps what is beyond their expectations—a Bruckner work completely realized from beginning to end. Its lofty mood is remarkably sustained throughout, adding to something which cannot be conscientiously said of his symphonies: a masterwork in tone. The performance, to my ear, has a warmer tone, a deeper sensitivity than the more familiar one by the Aachen Choir (RCA Victor); but the Gloria is abbreviated, the issue restricted to five discs rather than the six of its competitor. What the date of original recording may be, I cannot say; but it is certainly the best of the present series.

GLUCK: *"Alceste" Overture. Wilhelm Furtwängler conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.* (Capitol-Telefunken 81001, $1.25.)

A superb performance, and a welcome one, for there is no other version of this imposing score in the American catalogues at the present time. Gravity and force are blended by Furtwängler in appropriate proportions, the result a true phonographic classic.

HINDEMITH: *"Mathis der Maler." Paul Hindemith conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.* (Capitol-Telefunken album ECL 2503, $5.)

Were this performance to be measured against such a one as Eugene Ormandy gave with the Philadelphia Orchestra in New York a few weeks ago, it would be regretfully rejected for want of the true colors of the likenesses Hindemith drew of Matthias Grünewald's altar pieces. However, Ormandy has learned much about this score since he made his recording of it eight years ago, and that recording (RCA Victor album 854) is much less Hindemith than Hindemith's. Hence, to those now embarking on an acquaintance with the composer, I would recommend this as the clearer, more composed statement of his purpose. Though the recording was made fifteen years ago, it retains a surprising amount of color contrast, by contemporary standards, a richness of texture, and a range of fidelity no American issues of that date could now match. In fact, due to the liveness of the surroundings, there is an amount of aural perspective which only began to appear in our recordings of recent date. Why these masters should have remained in the Telefunken vaults when the composer himself was *untragbar* in Nazi Germany is an historical curiosity about which Capitol, in the role of wrong-righter, may illuminate us.

MOZART: *Rondo in D, K.382. Edwin Fischer, piano, with his chamber orchestra.* (RCA Victor 11-0031, $1.25.)

A favorite of the import fanciers, this disc is an auspicious restoration to the RCA catalogue, constituting the firm's shining deed for this month. To its artful, engaging patterns Fischer adds a deftness of touch, a distinction of thought truly recreative. Though formally designated a rondo, the scheme of the work seems to me more a theme and variations, with flutes and horns sharing the discourse with the piano. —IRVING KOLODIN.

## Contemporary Gloom

COPLAND: *Sonata for Piano (1939-41). Leonard Bernstein.* (RCA Victor album 1278, $4.75.)

Aaron Copland's piano sonata is a work of tragic sentiment. It has no recourse to the chromatic and atonal methods through which the lowest reaches of gloom are so often conveyed in our time. But its rhetoric is predominantly sustained—prophetic, in its darkly dissonant chords, of sorrowful things to come, and quietly resigned, at other points, to present sorrow and an overwhelming loneliness. The scherzo-like episodes, wiry and somewhat frenetic, occur only occasionally to set all this in relief.

Some listeners have heard bell-like sonorities in Copland's deeply inspired work, and there is, too, a suggestion of the hymn. This no doubt is a residue of Copland's experience with New England hymnody in writing the score for the film "Our Town," and there is indeed in the sonata something in common with the mood of the music for the cemetery scene in that film. Once this source material was absorbed into Copland's general vocabulary, of course, it emerged as something quite new, with little reference to New England specifically, or resemblance to what anyone else might do with such hymnody.

Copland has been very fortunate in those who have recorded his sonata: Leo Smit, who, not very long ago, made the album limited to Concert Hall Society subscribers, and Leonard Bernstein, who now makes it more generally available. Both young musicians have all the required dexterity and are especially aware of Copland's intentions because they belong to the musical orbit that has inevitably formed around him as a creative personality of great consequence. Bernstein's performance is not simply that of a conductor showing off his versatility. His is piano playing of beauty and power, though in a few instances its tone is hard. The freedom he takes with the score is thoroughly consistent with it, and he is kept from going astray by his extraordinary musical instincts and deep perception of the work as a whole. —ARTHUR V. BERGER.



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## SOVIET MUSIC

(Continued from page 46)

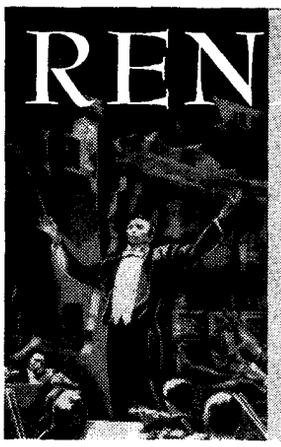
ing to be released) has been lost. With total disregard for harmonic logic, they are producing absolutely impossible combinations of sound.

Apparently some of these "leading composers" had been consoling themselves that they too would be classics one of these days; the Central Committee of the Communist Party bade them lay no such flattering unction to their souls.

> Some Soviet composers hold so aloof from the people that the unsound "theory" is current among them that the reason why the music of many modern Soviet composers is unintelligible to the people is supposedly that the latter are not yet "mature" enough to understand this subtle music, that they will be able to understand it only centuries hence, and that there is nothing to worry about if some compositions fail to appeal to listeners. . . . The cultivation of these and similar views is of the greatest harm to Soviet musical art. Tolerance of such views contributes to the spread among representatives of Soviet musical culture of tendencies alien to it, leading to a blind alley in the development of music, to the nullification of musical art.

Is Soviet music, then, doomed to be forced down finally—despite the ingenious wrigglings of the unfortunate composers—to the deadly level of Soviet painting? It really looks like it. But if an impertinent Western bourgeois, pitying their plight, may venture to offer Soviet composers a word of advice, it is this: They might do far worse than return to the study of folk music—which would be viewed most favorably by the authorities—not in the somewhat dilettante spirit of the "Mighty Handful," but in the light of the researches of Melgunov, Kastalsky, and others into the scale systems of Russian folk music (Russia proper, not so much those of the other peoples of the USSR, which should be left to their own musicians) and into Russian folk polyphony. By fully exploring the true harmonic implications of those scales and that polyphony, and building on them a complete harmonic system, they might at one and the same time find an outlet for that technically exploratory bent which must be given scope if a creative artist is not to be completely stifled—and satisfy even an unintelligent officialdom with conservative and (if they only knew it!) desperately bourgeois tastes.

*Gerald Abraham, James Alsop Professor of Music at the University of Liverpool, is a leading authority on the music of Russia.*

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# *Sir Thomas:*
## *A Record Jubilee*

AS a connoisseur all his life of the contradictory and the unusual, it is appropriate that Sir Thomas Beecham should continue to be one now, as his seventieth birthday is being celebrated. Instead of waiting for his friends to honor him with gifts, Beecham (with the cooperation of RCA Victor) has honored them with the issue of half a dozen new albums —a complete "Faust" among them, together with such pulse-quickening matter as Dvorak's "Golden Spinning Wheel" (which I have never heard before), Liszt's "Orpheus," the "Printemps" of Debussy, Mozart's "Concerto for Flute and Harp" (K.299), and what I prefer above all of these: a bright, bustling, new "Bartered Bride" Overture, plus unexcelled playings of the "Polka" and "Dance of the Comedians" from that score. Robert Lawrence has reviewed the long-awaited recording of "Faust" elsewhere in this issue. Next month fuller details of the other Beecham albums will be provided.

Difficult as it is to think of the phonograph without the work of this earnest hedonist, it is even more difficult to think of Beecham without it. The liaison has been a truly fortunate one, perpetuating for us a rich literature of music which would scarcely be known to us were it left to other conductors; and carrying the reputation and artistry of this man to many parts of the world where he could not possibly have gone himself. On a sheep ranch in New Zealand, in an apartment in Vancouver it is possible to appreciate what some people in metropolitan concert halls discovered long ago: that it is possible for a rich man's son to be a fine musician, and for an avid enthusiast to be an authority as well. Some critics of another day doubted this until the evidence of records proved inescapable.

More than most of his colleagues, Beecham is acutely conscious of what the phonograph means to the conductor; the extent to which it permits him to join the creative artist or the worker in words as one privileged to perpetuate durably his view of the world as he sees it, hears it, feels it. On his last visit to this country a year ago, Beecham made it clear that he conceived his task in the years ahead to be largely for the phonograph; to put on record all he has learned in his long life, all he has thought, all he has felt. I can't think of anything he would more value at this time than our fervent wish that he have the means and the health to accomplish his life's work. —THE EDITOR.

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| DuMont | Meadowbrook | 12″ | 525.00 | Includes FM radio |
| Philco | 1077 | 10″ | 549.50 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
| Stromberg-Carlson | TV12LM | 12″ | 549.50 | Includes FM radio |
| RCA | 8-TV-321 | 10″ | 550.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, single speed record player |
| RCA | 8-TC-270 | 16″ | 550.00 | |
| Garod | 12TZ3 | 12″ | 575.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
| Motorola | VF-103 | 10″ | 575.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
| Admiral | 4H18 | 12½″ | 595.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
| Magnavox | Berkeley | 12½″ | 595.00 | Includes AM-FM radio. With 10″ tube $50 less |
| Emerson | 608 | 16″ | 599.50 | |
| Philco | 1175 | 10″ | 599.50 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
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| Westinghouse | 207 | 10″ | 625.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
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| Philco | 1279 | 12″ | 649.50 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
| Admiral | 4H126 | 16″ | 695.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
| DuMont | Savoy | 12″ | 695.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, single speed record changer |
| GE | 820 | 12½″ | 695.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer |
| Magnavox | Hepplewhite | 12½″ | 695.00 | Includes AM-FM radio, dual speed record changer. With 10″ tube $50 less |
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# Some Highs and Lows

## TWO GROOVES, NOT THREE

IT WILL be midsummer before we can see the settled outlines of record playing equipment to come, after the upheaval occasioned by the three-speed era's beginning. However, one aspect of the situation has cleared well ahead of schedule—the cartridge front. Though the speeds are different, the grooves of Columbia 33 1/3 and Victor 45 rpm records are almost identical—playable with the same cartridge and needle point, other things being properly arranged. Three speeds but only two grooves, and Heaven be praised for that. The numerous microgroove cartridges already developed for Columbia LP's will do too for Victorgroove, and we will not be seeing any three-armed monsters. Many players will manage to be one-armed, if three gaited.

The new tiny "sugar-lump" cartridge introduced with LP last spring and now available for both grooves would seem obviously the development for the future. But manufacturing being what it is, almost the entire current development has seen the adaptation of existing standard large cartridges to microgroove playing. It will be a long while before these overlarge cartridges go, even though right now it is possible and highly desirable to reduce cartridge and arm bulk in line with other drastic shrinkages of size and weight.

Alas, a single cartridge and needle to play microgroove records (meaning, keep in mind, Victor and Columbia type grooves) as well as standard grooves is impossible. A single model with two alternative removable needles is not very practical; only one major make of this sort has appeared, the Clarkstan magnetic. The majority of manufacturers have done the next simplest thing, reproducing their standard cartridge types, model by model, in new microgroove versions identical in size, shape, brand name, and even performance characteristics —but not interchangeable. Thus, if you have followed recent pickup developments you'll now find familiar models such as Astatic's QT, the LT whisker needle type, the Nylon cartridge, and the newer MI magnetic (similar to the GE variable reluctance), all joined by twin microgroove versions. There are now twin GE and Pickering cartridges, one for each groove and looking exactly alike; and all of these with the usual metal, sapphire, or diamond point choices, for either groove.

What this means in practice is that to play the two grooves (at three speeds) on one and the same machine you, or your manufacturer, have the following clear choices:

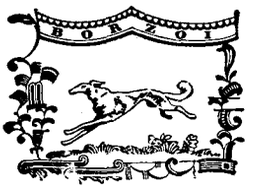
a) Two separate arms. A much-used practice, good, though clumsy, allowing the choice of best equipment for each groove type. The Microverter parasite player fits in this category as do numerous changer models now two-speed, shortly to appear in three-speed form. Often the microgroove arm is of the new small type, as in the current Philco changers. Professional equipment usually has two long arms.

b) One arm, with two plug-in sockets—one holding a microgroove cartridge, the other a corresponding standard model. Webster-Chicago's 256-27 changer uses this principle, with two GE cartridges in mind, though any other pair should work. An excellent compromise—and, paradoxically, the extra socket, being bulky, is unlikely to be mislaid or damaged. GE tonal quality (though reported impaired in early samples of the new short replaceable needle models) is a good bet for top reproduction of all records.

c) One arm, with provision for changing the cartridge itself. The Astatic plug-in sugar-lump cartridges and their small arm are fine for non-changing players of small dimensions; I've built one two-speed model already and find it good. Until recently replacing a standard-size cartridge was no plug-in job, what with inaccessible screws and clumsy contacts to be removed and put back. Pickering helped with a slide-in mount, but the contacts still were hard to make. (Often they are soldered on.) All that is changed now, via a marvelously helpful new arm, the Clarkstan Trionic, which swallows almost any standard-size cartridge, either groove, with a simple twist of a side clamp; spring contacts in the rear make automatic connections and a sliding weight adjusts instantly. Worth any non-changer man's consideration and ideal for experimenting.

d) A final development is the double-point cartridge, mounted in a single arm with reversible turnaround head, now used in numerous changers. Types vary (as, alas, does performance); the trend is towards use of two separate inserted needles, often of already familiar types (Astatic Q needle, for example) and each individually replaceable. Technical problems are not easily solved here—it is always safer to use entirely separate cartridges.

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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# THE YOUNGER SET

WHATEVER the merits of the new Victorgroove "system" in general, there is interest in it for parents seeking an inexpensive way of building a record library for the youngsters. There is a promising representation of material for the younger folk in the first batch of releases, and it is expected that the quantity will mount steadily during the next months. In addition, all new items added to the general catalogue will be processed on the unbreakable 45 rpm discs beginning in June.

If the purchaser is satisfied that RCA Victor merchandise alone will serve his needs, the compact all-in-one unit selling for $39.95 may be recommended. This embodies the changer along with small amplifier and speaker, and is thus a self-contained phonograph. The tone quality is clear, though naturally limited in fidelity compared with standard-size models; the mechanism is simple enough for even a small child to manage unassisted, with little possibility of damage. It has the further advantage of portability, so that it can be used in the nursery, for example, on a porch, or any place where an electrical outlet is available. Lest there be misunderstanding, it may be mentioned again that it will play *only* the 45 rpm record marketed by RCA Victor (and announced for early production by Capitol).

As an indication of what such a library might begin with, we note such favorites as "Peter Churchmouse," with Paul Wing (WY-329); "Little Black Sambo," another Paul Wing, (WY-333) and "Little Black Sambo's Jungle Band" (WY-334); "Pee Wee the Piccolo" (WY-344), "Rumpelstiltskin" (WY-354), told by Roland Winters; "The Further Adventures of Tubby the Tuba" (WY-365) and "Johnny Stranger" (WY-358), both narrated by Ray Middleton. Each set is priced at $1.50, and the records are, of course, unbreakable.

Of the new records, there is primary interest in a new venture by Columbia, derived from the series of historical reconstructions in modern radio manner familiar from broadcasts under the title of "You Are There." The first issues are "The Signing of the Magna Charta" (Columbia album 822, $3.95) and "The Battle of Gettysburg" (Columbia album 823, $3.95), with the pair combined on a single LP record (ML 2041, $4.85). This is an effort, according to Columbia "to make history both educational and entertaining, taking it out of musty old libraries."

Perhaps I, too, am musty, but I cannot go along with the new school of thought which holds that education should always follow the line of least resistance. In the instance of the "You Are There" discs, the use of contemporary newscasting techniques, employing such familiar voices and manners as John Daly, Ken Roberts, Don Hollenbeck, Quincy Howe, Richard Hottelet, and Ned Calmer does not seem a valid medium for conveying knowledge of historical milestones. It tends, in fact, to glorify radio itself by insinuating that this is the way such things would have been done had the means existed, and the way it should be done now that the means exist. That is, to say the least, questionable.

Specifically, in the "Magna Charta" the effort to supply comedy relief and "human interest" by participation of serfs and bondsmen goes against the grain; the lesson of "Magna Charta" would seem to have enough "human interest" in itself. As to the "Battle of Gettysburg," historians have offered many reasons why General Meade did not immediately pursue Lee's troops, and prevent them from crossing the Potomac. The answer at last is clear: he was detained, in all probability, by the announcer who dragged him to a CBS microphone to "analyze" his partial victory. Robert L. Shayon is producer, director, and writer for these discs, which, in technical respects, are remarkably well done.

Something new in discs for the younger child are the "Very Own Story" records produced by Anne Bassage, Mary Price, and Judith Payne. They cover such categories as "Birthday," "Get Well," "New Baby," "Just-a-Story," "Easter," "Christmas," "Summer Vacation," etc. By filling out a questionnaire obtainable from "Very Own Story," 124 Elizabeth, Ferguson 21, Missouri, you will receive a record made especially for your child, from the data submitted. The stories are in good taste, imaginatively produced, and profiting from the pleasant voice of Anne Bassage, the narrator. Interests from the ages of two to ten are well understood.

Also for the small fry is "The Music Listening Game" (YPR 720, $1.39), a Young People's Record in which the development of a child's musical pitch is fostered by a game. Norman Rose narrates the script by Daniel Andrews, in the established tradition of quality maintained by this organization. In "Health Can Be Fun" (Decca CU 114, $2), Frank Luther offers an adaptation of the Munro Leaf book, singing such items as "The Doctor Is Your Friend," "Let's Go to the Dentist," "If You Want to Be Healthy." Very tuneful, well recorded.

Finally, there is a welcome addition to the Golden Record Series, an excellent buy at 25¢ each, and attractively packaged. Ireene Wicker is always entertaining, though Anne Lloyd has not had suitable opportunities as yet. More of the short musical selections would be welcome, too. In the new batch are: "Pinocchio" (D3-4), "Turkey in the Straw" and "O Susanna" (17), "Yankee Doodle" and "Dixie" (19), "Camptown Races" and "Clementine" (21), "The Taxi That Hurried" and "Hansel and Gretel Dance" (15), "Five Little Firemen" and "Flute Dance—Bach" (14) and "Mother Goose Songs" (16, 18, 20, 22, 26, and 28).

—MARIE L. MUTCH.

## *My Favorite Records*

**Robert Haven Schauffler** has been a professional writer (with the accent on music) for nearly half a century. A prolific musical biographer, he has already chronicled the lives of Beethoven, Brahms, and Schumann. In June Putnam's will publish his latest opus in this vein: a full-length life of Franz Schubert, which will embody the new discoveries of Professor O. E. Deutsch.

SCHUBERT: *Trio in B flat. Heifetz, Feuermann, and Rubinstein.*

BRAHMS: *Double Concerto. Heifetz, Feuermann, and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy.*

BRAHMS: *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat. Artur Rubinstein.*

BRAHMS: *Trio in No. 2 in C. D'Aranyi, Hess, and Cassadó.*

BRAHMS: *"Variations on a Theme of Haydn." Toscanini conducting the New York Philharmonic.*

BACH: *Brandenburg Concertos. Busch Chamber Players.*

MOZART: *Divertimento in E flat, K.563. Heifetz, Primrose, and Feuermann.*

MOZART: *Quintet in G minor, K.516. Budapest Quartet and Katims.*

MOZART: *Divertimento in B flat, K.287. Joseph Szigeti.*

SCHUMANN: *Piano Concerto. Myra Hess recording.*

BEETHOVEN: *Opus 127 Quartet. Budapest Quartet.*



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# THE OTHER SIDE

## (IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

LONDON.

IF THE bewildered American gramophile visualizes his opposite numbers in Britain gathering in groups to discuss "L'affaire rpm" he is grossly mistaken. It is natural that, since the news of RCA Victor's answer to LP records began to reach these shores, the magic figures 33 1/3 and 45 occasionally turn up in the conversation, but no one here seems to be in the least worried. Fortunately for us in Britain, war—even of the cold variety—between HMV and Columbia is impossible, as both companies, with Parlophone and some others, belong to the same parent organization, Electric and Musical Industries, Ltd. This colossus's only rival is the Decca Company, with its Brunswick and Capitol satellites, which has made great strides during the last five years but is still far too small to challenge EMI on an issue of the kind that has thrown the U.S. record trade into such confusion. At present it seems most likely that our manufacturers will be content to sit on the fence until the American situation has sorted itself out, meanwhile continuing to improve the 78 rpm disc and possibly concentrating on the development of full frequency range aided by absolutely silent surfaces.

The most important musical event of the month in London is undoubtedly a complete concert performance of "Wozzeck," sponsored by the BBC. Alban Berg's great opera has not been heard here for a decade, so the BBC in addition to giving us a repeat broadcast performance a few days after the concert (March 16) is preparing their listeners by talks on Berg and Büchner, and by playing excerpts from the opera prior to the performance. Columbia has made its contribution to this notable event by releasing the fragments from "Wozzeck," so excellently played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy. I was much impressed by this recording even though the solo voice, Gertrude Ribla, was kept too much in the background.

"Wozzeck," though still a novelty to most of us, can hardly be described as a new work, but Benjamin Britten's "Holy Sonnets of John Donne" still fits in this category. This work and the Second String Quartet were written to mark the 250th anniversary of the death of Purcell, and both were heard for the first time in November 1945. Few composers, if any, since Purcell have set the English language with such freedom and mastery as Britten; he has an uncanny feeling for the natural rhythm of English poetry. Like so many of his vocal compositions, the Donne sonnets were clearly intended for his friend and faithful collaborator Peter Pears, who, with the composer at the piano, gives us an absolutely authoritative performance of these fine songs on three HMV records.

Happily, this month is not heavily burdened with routine duplications. HMV have attempted to better Decca's recent version of Mendelssohn's G minor Piano Concerto and have chosen as their protagonists Moura Lympany (fresh from her American tour) and Rafael Kubelik, the latter conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. There is little in it either way. The same orchestra is also heard under Nicolai Malko in a better-than-average version of the "Casse Noisette" Suite.

While there are already two existing versions of Mozart's great C minor Concerto, K.491, Decca's latest is so good that we cannot possibly classify it with the above. Kathleen Long brings great delicacy and refinement to her playing of the solo part, and compensates us by her sensitive musicianship for any lack in power. The gloriously rich orchestral part is beautifully played by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Van Beinum and their woodwind department is once again heard in its full glory. Decca's recording is restrained and translucent.

While still on the subject of Mozart, mention should be made of a lovely and unusual Columbia record, which contains a good performance by Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic of the noble "Masonic Funeral Music," K.477. It is a short but extraordinarily impressive work, written in 1786 in commemoration of two brother Masons, and scored for strings with a strange assortment of wind, containing basset horn and contra bassoon. The gentle major chord that ends this otherwise somber piece provides us with a Mozartean parallel to Bach's frequent surprise endings in the major—in both composers it is used as an optimistic affirmation of their beliefs.

Decca's new and delightful recording of Dvorak's popular "American" Quartet, Opus 96, has certainly reached the public the hard way. For some reason best known to themselves, the Griller Quartet recorded the slow movement first, then the opening Allegro, and finally the last two movements. Thereupon Decca blissfully pressed them in matrix number sequence, with the result that four out of six sides were incorrectly labeled and the couplings a veritable jumble, unfit for automatic sequence or manual operation. It fell to your correspondent to be the first to break this news to them, just in time to prevent the records reaching the shops. They have now been repressed and are at last on sale, three weeks behind schedule. The Grillers, who, to our loss, nowadays seem to spend much of their time across the Atlantic, give a superb performance of this charming music.

It is pleasant to be able to finish, as well as start, the month's report with something unconventional. The "Air des Adieux" from Tchaikovsky's "Jeanne d'Arc" is very infrequently heard nowadays. Decca's record of this scene contains, along with creditable but rather uneven singing from the mezzo-soprano Eugenia Zareska, some of the most exquisite orchestral playing I have ever heard in an operatic excerpt. From the much-maligned London Philharmonic—conducted here by Jean Martinon—such playing gives renewed hope for the future. Meanwhile I am glad to report that Eduard van Beinum's direction is already beginning to show the desired effect of greater cohesion, and the players talk of their new chief in terms of great enthusiasm.

—THOMAS HEINITZ.


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FOLLOW

**"The New Recordings"**

by E. T. CANBY

every week

in The Saturday Review


# HITS AND MISSES

ACUTE readers of this column will realize that we do not always write with, so to speak, complete cultural grasp, but we do our best. Our best unfortunately does not yet include an actual visit to the new Rodgers and Hammerstein sensation, "South Pacific," nor does it include hearing any of the music sung by the Broadway headliners, Mary Martin and Ezio Pinza. But we are able to report on absentee impressions of the play derived from records of the score made by other notable voices. The featured love song, "Some Enchanted Evening," is a limpid, beautiful example of pure Rodgers and Hammerstein, fit to stand with such Rodgers and Hart classics as "Where or When" and "Little Girl Blue"; you may have it excellently sung by Jo Stafford (Capitol 57-544, 79¢) or Bing Crosby (Decca 24609, 79¢). We were less impressed with the somewhat pallid version of Frank Sinatra (Columbia 38446, 63¢).

The other side of the Crosby enchantment is his superb version of the "South Pacific" song which we suspect will wear best in our own memory. We confess to a passionate tourist brochure attachment to the South Seas, where we have never been, and the idyllic nature of this number, "Bali Ha'i," half persuades us that Rodgers and Hammerstein have never been there either. The song hangs in our North, temperate ear making the most powerful counter-suggestions to West 34th Street, the New Jersey marshes, and other local landscapes. There is also a decent instrumental version by Hugo Winterhalter's orchestra (MGM 10399, 63¢). A much less special but thoroughly agreeable item is "Younger than Springtime," capably handled by Margaret Whiting (Capitol 57-542, 79¢). Those of the play's fast patter numbers which we have heard—"I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outta My Hair," "A Wonderful Guy," and "There Is Nothin' Like a Dame"—seem so sharply inferior to Cole Porter's musical witticisms in "Kiss Me, Kate" as to be negligible. But the sentimental strains of "South Pacific" are not to be missed by the susceptible.

One reason why this department regrets its imperviousness to bebop is the great appeal exerted by the performers in the simple matter of their names. Who, for instance, could resist the possibilities of music by someone called Tadd Dameron and his orchestra? And especially when it is further discovered that Dameron's alto saxophonist is named Sahib Shibab? Here, apparently, is the Mohammedan influence we have heard so much about in bebop, and we are personally pushovers for many aspects of Islamic culture from lowly mosques to the tinted legends of Isfahan. How will one resist Sahib Shibab on the alto? Now add in the fact that Mr. Dameron's trombonist bears the sobriquet Kai Winding, and that his trumpet challenges the imagination as Fats Navarro.

But when we play Mr. Dameron's new record "Sid's Delight" and "Casbah" (Capitol 57-60006, 79¢) what do we find? We find, in the case of the first side, just another of those gray, cheerless exercises in dissonantal syncopation which are beginning to sound as hackneyed as the dullest "swing" or "jump" music. And in the second side there is a constant approach to lyric interest—bebop almost acquires a sustained melodic element—but there is really nothing to live up to the promise of Sahib Shibab.

We have had more pleasure in the realms of semi-bebop. An organization called the Alice Hall Trio, with accordion, string bass, and drums, goes vitally to work on "Pennies from Heaven" and Juan Tizol's fine old stomp "Caravan" (Capitol 57-60007, 79¢). There is a certain amount of bebop vocalizing, but the main event is one of the lightest, deftest, most inventive performances on the accordion I can remember.

One of the ghastly features of American musical life which has thus far escaped mention in this column is the baby-talk singer. We don't know whether we are more appalled by the idea of these artists themselves or by that of the perverse souls who enjoy them. For students of abnormal psychology we subtend examples: "Kitchy Kitchy Koo" and "Kiss Me Sweet" by Judy Valentine (MGM 10394, 63¢) and "Rosetta" and "Gee, I Wonder What the Trouble Can Be" by Rose Murphy (RCA Victor 20-3409, 79¢).

Biologically authentic babies may well enjoy "Teddy Bear's Picnic" and "The Mosquitoes Parade" by Philip Green's orchestra (MGM 30194, 79¢) and we found them tastefully enough done to be amusing in the home; but we stick to the basic principle of filling the domestic air with music that a baby might continue to enjoy at sixty-five. —WILDER HOBSON.



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# Recordings Reports on Current Pop Releases

| PERFORMER, SONG, DATA | REPORT |
|---|---|
| Astaire, Fred: "Barkleys of Broadway." MGM Album L-8, $2.36. | Given half a chance, Astaire is as genial an entertainer as there is today; and in these songs by Harry Warren and Ira Gershwin, he has that and more—material worthy both of his talents and those of "Ginger" Rogers, who joins him on "My One and Only Highland Fling" (a mock-Scotch broth of a tune). "Shoes with Wings On" is a gay rhythm conceit, "You'd Be Hard to Replace" a Berlinish ballad. And for those who have lost their old Brunswick record, or never had it, Astaire reprises the brother Gershwin's "They Can't Take That Away from Me." Sound track recording, with fine orchestral work under the direction of Lennie Hayton. As an afterthought: "Shoes with Wings On" is great! |
| Carroll, Helen: "In the Spring of the Year." Mercury 5278, 79¢. | A pastoral pleasantry by Alec Wilder, with a Hammersteinish lyric by Lee Kuhn, of which the tune is charming but a mite hard for voices of pop caliber such as Miss Carroll's. The two-piano background by Cy Walter and Stan Freeman (familiar from ABC's "Piano Playhouse") is first rate. Also a Wilder, and a beautiful one, is the overside "While We're Young." |
| Drake, Alfred: "In the Spring of the Year." RCA Victor 20-3416, 79¢. | More of the above, in Drake's "Curly" manner, but not yet of the quality the tune merits. "Malaguena, I went my inconstant way" is an example of the lyric treatment applied to Lecuona's favorite on the overside. I never heard of Cuban corn before, but this is it. |
| Goodman, Al: "Kiss Me, Kate" selection. RCA Victor 28-0434. $1.05.<br><br>"South Pacific" selection. RCA Victor 28-0435, $1.05. | Comprehensive medleys from the two premier scores of the year, done with taste, suavity, and the kind of grace appropriate to them. "So in Love," "Wunderbar," "Why Can't You Behave," "Bianca" are among the Porter tunes featured, with "Were Thine That Special Face" singled out for special beguine treatment. The Rodgers collection is notable for the inclusion of "Loveliness of Evening," a charming tune excised from the score during the Boston run. Otherwise, "One Enchanted Evening," "Bali Ha'i," "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outta My Hair," "Wonderful Guy," and "Younger Than Springtime" are favored. Goodman's fashion is truer to Porter than it is to Rodgers. |
| Levy, Louis: "Richard Rodgers Suite." London album 22, $4.20. | Similar in style and treatment to the previous albums devoted to Gershwin and Porter, this one finds Levy, of England, recalling such memorable tunes as "The Girl Friend," "Where or When," "Small Hotel," "Thou Swell," "Little Girl Blue," and half a dozen others even more familiar. Gratefully, too, the list includes "Dancing on My Ceiling," written for an English revue, and never very popular in this country, but *echt* Rodgers, nevertheless. The arrangements are thoughtful, the playing expert, the recording excellent. |
| Herron, Joel: "Wizard of Oz." MGM album L-9, $2.36. | Half a dozen tunes from the well-remembered Harold Arlen score, performed in good style under the direction of Joel Herron. Nominally a children's album, it is worth investigation by anyone partial to the material. "Over the Rainbow" and "We're Off to See the Wizard" are supplemented by "If I Only Had a Heart," "The Merry Old Land of Oz," and "Ding Dong the Witch Is Dead." |
| Noble, Ray: "Just Reminiscing." Columbia 38404,63¢. | A more recent sample of the stylish work of this tasteful maestro, utilizing a ballad ideally suited to his couth manner. With it is a reminiscence of the Noble who engaged Bud Freeman and other high-powered jazz musicians for his first dance band in this country—a jump treatment of a tune easily recognizable as based on "Allouette." |
| Stafford, Jo: "Kiss Me, Kate." Capitol album CD 144, $3.75. | The best treatment to date, other than the original-cast album, of Porter's score, with Jo Stafford singing "Why Can't You Behave," "I Hate Men," "Always True to You in My Fashion," and Gordon MacRae allotted "Were Thine That Special Face," "Bianca," and "So in Love." Together they do "Wunderbar" and Paul Weston has a side for "Too Darn Hot." Miss Stafford sings well in what is commonly called "sultry" fashion, and MacRae is able enough for everything but "Wunderbar." The style throughout is more informal than the theatrical pattern set by the show, Weston's supervision excellent. |


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RECORD MART
on page 62.





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# Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

### Report on LP Report

SIR: Congratulations on "Report on LP." Would like to see it a weekly feature until all present LP's are reviewed. After that a monthly review would be sufficient. Also, will the BASIC RECORD LIBRARY be published in book form?

W. KATZENSTEIN.
Blackwood, N. J.

SIR: Heartfelt thanks for your really worth-while comparisons of LP records. Keep up the good work.

TOM MARSHALL.
Chicago, Ill.

SIR: I find the new column which compares LP and standard discs very helpful and very necessary. By all means continue.

A. BERNARD.
Los Angeles, Calif.

SIR: Please continue reviewing all LP's. If they are better, I certainly want to replace many of my Columbia records.

LEON R. TOKMAN.
Chicago, Ill.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *These and other readers who endorse the Burke series of LP-Standard comparisons will find a continuation of it on page 47. We intend, as space permits, to pursue the inquiry until the principal items have been accounted for, or until the standard of production makes comparisons unnecessary.*

### "Bluebird" Classical?

SIR: We know that because of language differences there is disagreement on the definitions of some words (such as "democracy"), but how come the record "Bluebird of Happiness" is listed by you as a classical number? I would appreciate your definition of classical as applied to music.

CHARLES DAVIS.
Bronx, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We presume reader Davis refers to the listing of "Bluebird of Happiness" in the* RECORDS OVER THE NATION. *Such nominations are made by the dealers, who are often inclined to think in terms of artists and price structures rather than types of music. Thus "Bluebird of Happiness" is sung by Jan Peerce, issued on a Red Seal disc, and sells for as much as Schubert's "An die Musik." Hence it is considered, for this limited purpose, as in the "classical" category. As for our general definition of "classical as applied to music," we doubt that it would differ greatly from Mr. Davis's.*

### Reluctant Maestro

SIR: What has become of the move for the release of the Toscanini broadcasts? Or did your survey show insufficient demand for them?

D. R. WADIA.
Salt Lake City, Utah

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The survey showed a considerable interest in such records, even if they were to be released at premium prices. However, the matter —at last report—rested with Maestro Toscanini's opinion of the quality involved, both of performance and reproduction, and the assumption must be that he did not give his consent to their release.*

### On 45 RPM

SIR: Since . . . you wrote that no one has written in support of RCA Victor's 45 rpm position, I'll jump in. 1) If Victor had been the first by about a year with their record, Columbia would now be the scapegoat, so nuts to talk about RCA Victor being a dog in the manger. 2) . . . LP has not solved any problem inherent in recording or playback, . . . tracking error, volume contraction, etc. . . . 3) I was lucky enough to hear the Victor demonstration and . . . have enough technical knowledge and experience with records to go along with what Victor claims . . . no tracking error, no distortion, no volume expansion or contraction, and a better vinylite. . . .

N. HALS.
Cleveland, Ohio

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The question of precedence has been argued* ad infinitum, *and no clear proof of "scapegoat" emerges: What emerges is that a major diversion from established standards was produced and publicized, to be followed by another major diversion. As to solving "problems inherent in recording," it seems to us absurd to decry a step forward because you use legs to do it, and haven't figured out a way of preventing a bone from breaking. Let's have the major improvements first, and the refinements afterwards.*

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# *Records Over the Nation*

***A Dealer Survey of Top Record Sellers***

| *City and Store* | *Popular Singles* | *Popular Albums* | *Classical Singles* | *Classical Albums* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BERKELEY, CALIF.** (*Berkeley Music House*) | Again (L) | Songs of the Veld (D) | Mignon-Di Stefano (RCA) | Boeuf sur le Toit (C) |
| **BIRMINGHAM** (*Stairway to Music*) | Cruising Down the River (MGM) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Gypsy Airs (RCA) | Mozart Piano Sonata #12 (RCA) |
| **CHICAGO** (*Hudson-Ross, Inc.*) | Cruising Down the River (MGM) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Clair de Lune (RCA) | I Can Hear It Now (C) |
| **CINCINNATI** (*Steinberg's, Inc.*) | Cruising Down the River (MGM) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Corelli Suite (C) | Mahler #5 (C) |
| **DALLAS** (*The Record Shop*) | Careless Hands (RCA) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Malaguena (RCA) | Hamlet (RCA) |
| **DENVER** (*Knight-Campbell Music Co.*) | Cruising Down the River (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Clair de Lune (RCA) | Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto (RCA) |
| **DETROIT** (*Campus Record Shop*) | Again (M) | Edith Piaf (C) | Overture, I Vespri (HMV) | Mozart #40 (C) |
| (*Doubleday Book Shops*) | A Little Bird (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Clair de Lune (RCA) | Chopin Nocturnes (RCA) |
| **KANSAS CITY** (*Jenkins Music Co.*) | Cruising Down the River (D) | Words and Music (MGM) | The Lord's Prayer (C) | Hamlet (RCA) |
| **MEMPHIS** (*Words and Music*) | Cruising Down the River (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Ave Maria (RCA) | Chopin Favorites (RCA) |
| **MINNEAPOLIS** (*Don Leary's, Inc.*) | Forever and Ever (D) | To Mother (RCA) | Jalousie (RCA) | Nutcracker Suite (C) |
| **NASHVILLE** (*M U Sound System*) | Cruising Down the River (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Jalousie (RCA) | I Can Hear It Now (C) |
| **NEW ORLEANS** (*Van Husen Music Co.*) | Cruising Down the River (L) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Fauré Pavane (C) | Rigoletto excerpts (Cet) |
| **NEW YORK** (*Doubleday Book Shops*) | Once in Love with Amy (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Greensleeves (C) | Hamlet (RCA) |
| (*Dynamic Electronics*) | Again (L) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Freischutz-Welitsch (C) | Wesendonck Songs (RCA) |
| (*Haynes Griffin*) | There's Nothing Like a Dame (Cap) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Buxtehude Cantata (RCA) | Masquerade (RCA) |
| (*Liberty Music Shop*) | Riders in the Sky (RCA) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Freischutz-Welitsch (C) | Bartók Concerto for Orchestra (C) |
| (*Rabson's*) | Bali Ha'i (RCA) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Buxtehude Cantata (RCA) | Pathetique Symphony (RCA-45) |
| **PHILADELPHIA** (*Jacobs Bros.*) | Cruising Down the River (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | White Peacock (C) | Chopin Ballades (RCA) |
| (*H. Royer Smith Co.*) | Cruising Down the River (MGM) | Jazz at the Philharmonic #9 (M) | Toccata and Fugue, D minor (HMV) | French Organ Music (C) |
| **PORTLAND, ORE.** (*Sherman Clay & Co.*) | Cruising Down the River (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Polonaise (RCA) | Chopin Favorites (RCA) |
| **ST. LOUIS** (*Doubleday Book Shops*) | Cruising Down the River (D) | Kiss Me, Kate (C) | Bluebird of Happiness (RCA) | Beethoven Piano Concerto #4 (C) |

Compiled as of April 13, 1949.

Key: C—Columbia Cap—Capitol Cet—Cetra D—Decca HMV—His Master's Voice L—London M—Mercury RCA—RCA Victor

Leaders: Strong buying trends are present only in the popular categories. "Cruising Down the River" leads among the singles with twelve entries, preference being shown for the Russ Morgan version on Decca. Columbia's original-cast "Kiss Me, Kate" album continues to lead the field. This month seventeen stores have reported the popular Cole Porter waxing. No special favorites are apparent among the classical record entries.

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